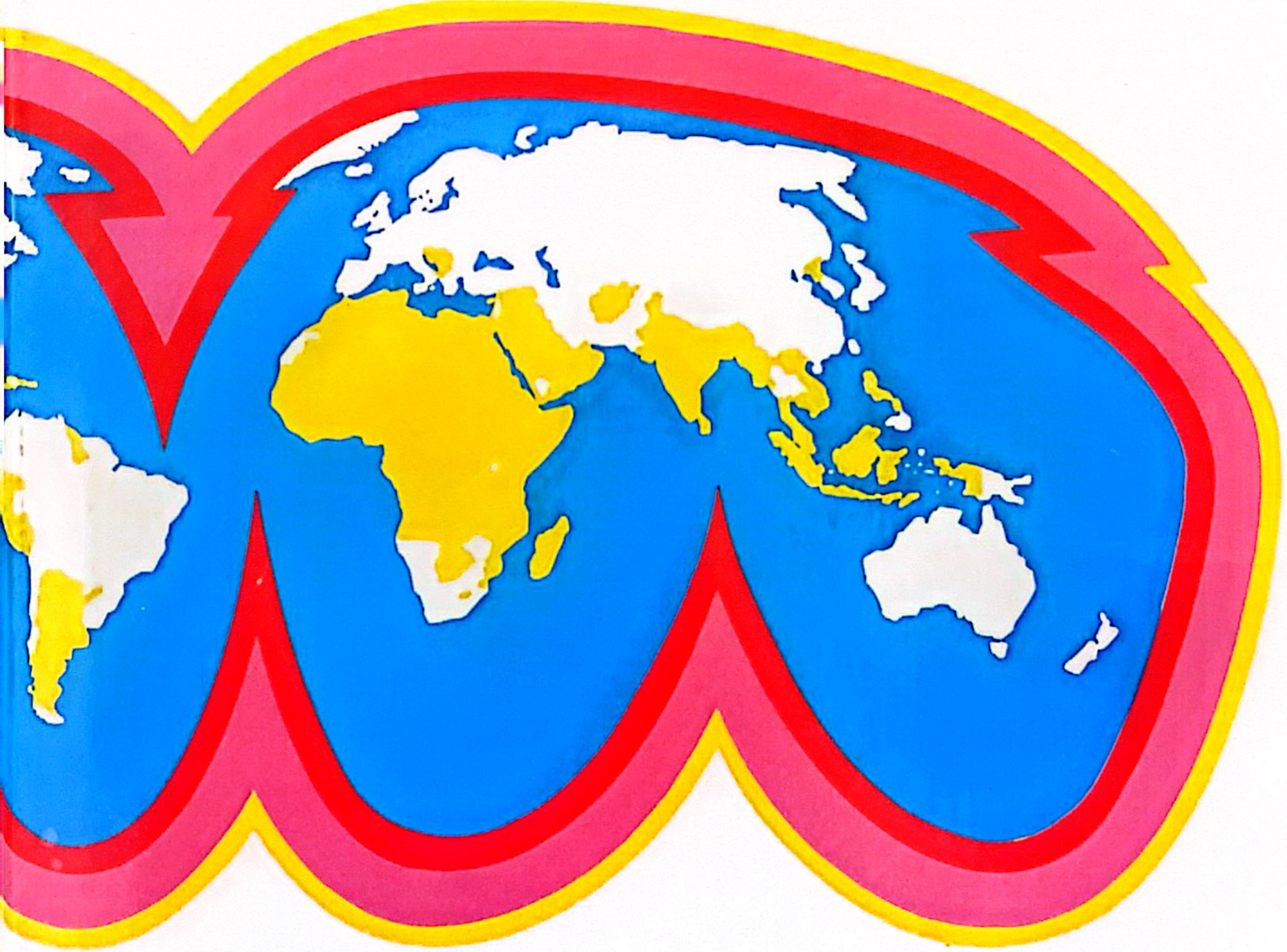
THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES



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THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

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THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES

CONTENTS

Introduction 9
Afghanistan 17
Algeria 23
Angola 37
Argentina 47
Bahrein 63
Bangladesh 69
Benin 75
Bhutan 83
Bolivia 87
Botswana 95
Burma 99
Burundi 107
Cameroon 113
Cape Verde 119
Central African Republic 125
Chad 131
Comoros 139
Congo 145
Cuba 155
Cyprus 189
Djibouti 197
Egypt 205
Equatorial Guinea 217
Ethiopia 221
Gabon 235
Gambia 243
Ghana 247
Grenada 255
Guinea (RPR) 263
Guinea-Bissau 271
Guyana 279
India 287
Indonesia 297
Iran 305
Iraq 327
Ivory Coast 339
Jamaica 345
Jordan 353
Kampuchea (PR) 361
Kenya 371
Korea (PDR) 379
Kuwait 387
Laos 395
Lebanon 405
Lesotho 417
Liberia 423
Libya 427
Madagascar 435
Malawi 445
Malaysia 449
Maldives 455
Mali 459
Malta 465
Mauritania 471
Mauritius 477
Morocco 483
Mozambique 493
Namibia 501
Nepal 413
Nicaragua 519
Niger 527
Nigeria 533
Oman 541
Pakistan 547
Palestine (PLO) 553
Panama 561
Peru 567
Qatar 573
Rwanda 579

Santa Lucia 585
Sao Tome and Principe 591
Saudi Arabia 597
Senegal 609
Seychelles 617
Sierra Leone 625
Singapore 631
Somalia 635
Sri Lanka 643
Sudan 651
Surinam 659
Swaziland 667
Syria 671
Tanzania 683
Togo 691
Trinidad and Tobago 697
Tunisia 701
Uganda 709
United Arab Emirates 715
Upper Volta 723
Vietnam 729
Yemen (AR) 743
Yemen (PDR) 753
Yugoslavia 763
Zaire 771
Zambia 783
Zimbabwe 791
Annex 797

INTRODUCTION

In 1981, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries marked the twentieth year of its existence, although at the time of its birth the capitalist press predicted that it would have a short duration.

Since then the Movement has almost quadrupled its membership from 25 full members at the First Summit Conference, held in Belgrade in 1961, to 95 members at the last Summit Conference, which met in Havana in 1979.

Parallel with its numerical growth, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has scored significant achievements in the pursuance of its guiding principles as drawn up and adopted at its inception, i.e.:

(1) anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism and anti-neocolonialism,
(2) struggle for international detente,
(3) opposition to apartheid, racism and Zionism,
(4) opposition to military alliances,
(5) opposition to military bases of the imperialist powers on the territories of the non-aligned countries or in colonial countries,
(6) economic and political cooperation between the countries of the so-called Third World, and
(7) struggle for a new international economic order.

The Movement has advanced over the years of its existence without any constituent charter and has been guided in its activities only by a set of principles and rules formulated in the course of its work. This fact, just as the consensus used for the adoption of its documents and decisions, have given the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries the flexibility which is essential for preserving the harmony of such a heterogeneous body.

It was only at the Fourth Summit Conference, held in Algiers in 1973, where the decision was taken to establish a Coordinating Bureau made up of seventeen countries. This Bureau was given a very specific mandate, including the following tasks:

(a) preparation of the Fifth Summit Conference in Colombo,
(b) preparation of a meeting of Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries, which was then held in Lima in 1975,
(c) coordination of the activities and positions of the member-countries and their governments, particularly within the framework of the United Nations,
(d) study of the possibility of establishing a Permanent Secretariat of the Movement and submission of recommendations to this effect,
(e) assistance to the member-countries in the exercising of their responsibilities as regards the Programme of Economic Cooperation Between the Non-Aligned Countries, as well as supervision over the implementation of that Programme.

The next Summit Conference, held in Colombo in 1976, provided in greater detail for the structure, operation and competence of the Coordinating Bureau. It was stipulated that between the Summit Conferences, "the Coordinating Bureau shall be the organ of the non-aligned countries charged with the task of coordinating their joint activities aimed at the implementation of the programmes adopted at the Summit Conferences, at ministerial conferences, at meetings of groups of non-aligned countries in the United Nations, and at other meetings of the non-aligned countries".

As agreed upon in Colombo, the Coordinating Bureau should base its membership on the principles of geographical distribution, continuity and rotation. The Decision on the Composition and Mandate of the Coordinating Bureau, adopted in Sri Lanka, specified in detail the duties imposed on that body. It was also determined that the Chairman of the Coordinating Bureau would be representative of the country which hosted the last Summit Conference, and all his powers and duties were laid out.

The Coordinating Bureau—just as the Movement in general—adopts its decisions by concensus and its sessions are open to all members of the Movement interested in attending them.

The services necessary for the functioning and coordination of the Bureau's work during its regular sessions within the framework of the United Nations are provided by its Chairman through his country's mission to the supreme world organization, which can turn for assistance to the missions of other non-aligned countries.

The Sixth Summit Conference in Havana agreed to raise the number of members of the Coordinating Bureau to 36 in view of the increased membership of the Movement, which at the time of the session in the Cuban capital had reached 94 full members, the largest number in the history of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

At the previous Summit Conference in Colombo, the same considerations had led to a decision increasing the membership of the Coordinating Bureau from 17 to 25.

In the recent period, the Summit Conferences have been held every year, meeting in the capital of non-aligned countries and following a rotation system based on the individual continents. Between two Summit Conferences, a regular conference of foreign ministers is held, but if a special event so requires, they can meet in extraordinary session.

The Coordinating Bureau meets regularly twice between two Summit Conferences at the level of foreign ministers. In the recent period the Bureau has been meeting at the level of heads of mission to the United Nations approximately once a month in the supreme world organization.

Also meeting between the Summit Conferences are representatives of the non-aligned countries from the different spheres of economic cooperation between these countries. Their sessions are held in different capitals as much as possible on a rotary basis.

Admission to membership of the Movement is governed by principles set by the Preparatory Conference held in Cairo several weeks prior to the First Summit Conference in Belgrade. These principles involve adherence to and observance of the ideas which gave birth to the Movement, non-participation in military blocs, as well as rejection of foreign military bases on the territory of the respective countries.

At the present time there are three levels of membership in the Movement: (a) full members, (b) observers, and (c) guests. Since the Summit Conference in Colombo, there has been one member of the Movement with *special* status, namely Belize, which was unable to gain independence beacause of a very specific situation.

As already noted, the Movement includes a number of coordinating groups for the realization of the individual aspects of the Programme of Economic Cooperation between the Non-Aligned Countries. Apart from these coordinating groups, of which there have been seventeen since the Havana Summit Conference, there is also an Intergovernamental Committee for the Mass Media of Comunication, to which the Pool of News Agencies and the Radio and Television Pool of the Non-Aligned Countries are subordinated.

Another specific feature of the Movement is the form of financing its meetings and activities. This is done in aliquot parts, although the financial possibilities of each member are taken into account.

All these typical features have given the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries a singular character which it has had ever since its inception in the pursuance of the objectives set by its founders.

However, in spite of their great achievements scored in the past years, the non-aligned countries are facing, at the beginning of the 1980s, an international situation which is very much like the historical situation existing at the birth of their movement.The threat which has been hanging in the recent period over detente—with all the dire consequences this may have for mankind—is reminiscent of the situation in which the world found itself in those turbulent days, when the first steps were taken, which later on developed into the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

THE BANDUNG CONFERENCE

Although several meetings of representatives of the developing countries had been held before 1955, historians view the Bandung Conference as the direct antecedent of the process which eventually led to the formation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Afro-Asian Conference, held from April 18 to 24, 1955, in the city of Bandung, Java, which gave its name, was attended by 29 African and Asian countries representing some 1,550 million people.

The participants of that conference were Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia (Kampuchea), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), China, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gold Coast (Ghana), India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Siam (Thailand), South Vietnam, Syria, Sudan, Turkey and Yemen.

The well-known leaders who attended the conference in Bandung included Jawaharlal Nehru, Pham Van Dong, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Ahmed Sukarno, and Chou En Lai. The only one of these participants who is still alive today is the Vietnamese leader Pham Van Dong.

China, which had participated in the Bandung Conference, eventually became isolated after she provoked the opposition of the other countries — especially in Asia — by her hegemonistic trends in the area, as manifested in the statement by the government in Peking, that China held "special responsibility in the Asian Zone".

The final communique unanimously adopted by the Bandung Conference contains a clear outline of the ideas of positive neutrality and active non-alignment, which were subsequently reflected in the deliberations of the First Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which met in Belgrade.

The process of desintegration of the colonial system, which intensified after the end of World War II, contributed to the adoption of the political line manifested in Bandung.

The final declaration of the 1955 Afro-Asian Conference also noted the growth of the cold-war policy launched by the United States shortly after the conclusion of that world-wide conflagration.

A number of major events of both anti-colonial and imperialist character occurred between the signing of the unconditional surrender of the German armed forces on May 8, 1945, and the moment when work began at the conference on the island of Java. In that short period of one decade from 1945 to 1955, the French imperialists launched their "hot war" against the people of Vietnam, the Korean people had to fight a war of liberation against the American aggressors, a vigorously prosecuted anti-imperialist movement resulted in the formation of the Republic of India, a similar process brought about the proclamation of the Republic of Egypt, and the People's Republic of China came into being as the climax of a revolutionary civil war to list only the major events.

At the same time, the United States, pursuing its aim of world domination, put into effect a number of unilateral and multilateral moves. The former included the proclamation of the Truman Doctrine and the implementation of the Marshall Plan on the international scene, while at home the reactionary Taft-Hartley Act was passed by Congress and the leaders of the Communist Party of the United States were prosecuted and tried. On the multilateral level, Washington forced the formation of the Pact of Rio de Janeiro in 1947, of NATO in 1949, of ANZUS in 1951, and of SEATO in 1954, in addition to its subsequent involvement in the Baghdad Pact, originally concluded by Turkey and Iraq in 1955.

Faced with this growth of military blocs, the governments of the socialist countries—the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland and Rumania—decided to conclude a Treaty of Mutual Assistance in Warsaw at a time subsequent to the Bandung Conference.

At that conference, the participating countries adopted the following principles:

(1) respect for the basic rights of nations in keeping with the principles enunciated in the United Nations Charter;

(2) respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations;

(3) recognition of the equality of all races and all nations, both large and small;

(4) non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of the other countries;

(5) respect for the right of every nation to defend itself individually and collectively in agreement with the United Nations Charter;

(6) refusal to participate in collective defence projects designed to serve the particular interests of the great powers, no matter which powers they are; condemnation of any pressure put on another country at the instigation of any great power;

(7) abstention from any act or threat of aggression or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of another country;

(8) settlement of all international conflicts by peaceful means, such as negotiation or conciliation, arbitration, international tribunals, or any other peaceful means which may be chosen by the interested countries in accord with the United Nations Charter;

(9) promotion of mutual interests and cooperation;

(10) respect for justice and international obligations.

FROM BANDUNG TO BELGRADE

In the course of the six years which passed from the Bandung Conference to the First Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade, the anti-colonial process scored a number of major achievements mainly in Africa and Asia, and to a lesser degree also in Latin America.

This anti-colonial process, united with a growing peace movement opposing the cold-war policy pursued by the United States, helped inspire a movement of solidarity at both regional and intercontinental levels.

In the short span of time between Bandung and Belgrade, Africa saw the holding of the Conference of Independendent African States in Accra, the Conference of Progressive African Countries in Casablanca, the launching of the armed liberation struggle in Angola, the armed French aggression against the Tunisian people in Bizerte, and the release of the Kenyan leader Jomo Kenyatta as the result of a world-wide mobilization of public opinion.

In Asia, Indian troops entered the Portuguese colony of Goa and within 48 hours put an end to 450 years of foreign domination of that enclave, while in Indonesia, President Sukarno ordered general mobilization to liberate West Irian from Dutch rule.

In Latin America, the Cuban Revolution triumphed, the United States-supported invasion by mercenaries at Playa Giron was defeated, and in Guyana, Cheddi Jagan, leader of the People's Progressive Party, formed the government, among the other events.

On the intercontinental level, the First Afro-Asian Conference met in Cairo in 1957, in the course of which the Organization of Solidarity of African and Asian Peoples was constituted.

The anti-colonial process had reached such a momentum in this period, that on December 14, 1960, the United Nations adopted the important Declaration on Granting Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. This move was preceded by the world-wide indignation aroused by the murder of the Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba, instigated by colonialist and imperialist forces.

SUMMIT CONFERENCES

In the year following the Bandung Conference and in the context of the historical developments already described, the leaders of Egypt, India and Yugoslavia — Gamal Abdel Nasser, Jawaharlal Nehru and Josip Broz Tito — met on the Yugoslav island of Brioni. In the light of the results achieved in Bandung, they discussed the prospects of what later led to the formation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The process of this formation received a decisive impulse in 1960, at the 15th session of the U.N. General Assembly, when seventeen new African and Asian countries were admitted to the world organization.

Making use of that event, Nehru, Sukarno, Nkrumah, Nasser and Tito met at the United Nations in New York, and their meeting spurred the convening of the First Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade a year later.

On April 26, 1961, President Gamal Abdel Nasser of the United Arab Republic and President Josip Broz Tito of Yugoslavia addressed a message to the heads of state of 21 countries, In this message, Nasser and Tito pointed to the usefulness of convening a conference based on the earlier talks, which would be aimed at improvement of international relations, renunciation of the policy of force, and constructive solution of the problems and conflicts existing in the world.

On that occasion, the Egyptian and Yuguslav Presidents also condemned the mercenary invasion of Cuba at Playa Giron, supported and aided by the United States government.

The Nasser-Tito meeting was followed on May 18, by a message convening a preparatory session in Cairo from June 5 to 12 to lay the foundations for the First Summit Conference in Belgrade. That message was signed by the heads of state of the United Arab Republic, as the host country, Yugoslavia, Indonesia, India, and Afghanistan.

The Cairo session unanimously approved the holding of the Summit Conference in Belgrade and adopted a draft agenda of the points to be discussed.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has held up to now six Summit Conferences —in Belgrade in 1961, in Cairo in 1964, in Lusaka in 1970, in Algiers in 1973, in Colombo in 1976, and in Havana in 1979.

The Summit Conference in Belgrade, which took place from September 1 to 6, was attended by 25 countries as full members of the Movement, three observer countries, and by representatives of national liberation movements and international organizations.

The member-countries participating in the Belgrade Summit Conference were Afghanistan, Algeria, Burma, Cambodia (Kampuchea), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Congo (Zaire), Cuba, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Lebanon, Mali, Morocco, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, The United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria), Yemen, and Yugoslavia.

The conference adopted a final declaration, an appeal for peace and to avert the threat of war, and letters addressed to the heads of state of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, and of the United States, President John F. Kennedy, urging them to resume negotiations aimed at removing the risk of war and at ensuring peace.

At the Second Summit Conference in Cairo, which was held from October 5 to 10, 1964, the number of member-countries participating in the deliberations rose to 47 and that of observers to 10.

The conference adopted a final declaration entitled "A Programme of Peace and International Cooperation", as well as a resolution pointing to the necessity of coordinating the efforts of the Movement with those of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which was founded in 1963.

At the Third Summit Conference held in Lusaka from September 8 to 10, 1970, the membership in the Movement already stood at 54, and there were 10 observers.

That conference was also attended by representatives of eight national liberation movements, some of which later took part in the Movement as full members, having obtained their independence. This was true of Mozambique, Angola and Zimbabwe.

Two declarations were adopted in Lusaka—one on peace, development, cooperation, and democratization of international relations, the other on non-alignment and economic progress.

Other resolutions adopted in the Zambian capital concerned the Near East Indochina, decolonization, the policy of apartheid, Portuguese colonies, Namibia, Zimbabwe, the United Nations, disarmament, strengthening of the role played by the non-aligned countries, Cyprus, sea resources, the Israeli aggresssion against Lebanon, and the arrest by Israel authorities of two Algerian citizens.

The fourth Summit Conference, held in Algiers from September 5 to 9, 1970, was attended by 75 member-countries (i.e. three times as many as at the First Summit Conference in Belgrade), 23 observers, and three guest countries.

Of the 23 observers, 16 represented national liberation movements, inlcuding—for the first time—the Socialist Party of Puerto Rico, which has since then attended all the Summit Conferences.

The Summit Conference in Algiers adopted a Political Declaration, an Economic Declaration, a Programme of Action for Economic Cooperation Among Countries, as well as a number of resolutions.

Agreement was also reached to establish, for the first time, a Coordination Bureau, whose members were Algeria, Cuba, Guyana, India, Kuwait, Liberia, Malaysia, Mali, Nepal, Peru, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tanzania, Yugoslavia, and Zaire.

The Fifth Summit Conference took place in Colombo, the capital of Sri Lanka, from August 16 to 19, 1976. It was attended by 86 member-countries, 22 observers, and 4 guests. Joining the session as full members were the former Portuguese colonies Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe Islands, as well as the Seychelles Islands, the Camorro Islands, Vietnam, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, and Panama.

The Palestine Liberation organization, which until then had participated in the Movement as an observer, took part in the Colombo session as a full member in a gesture of support for the Palestinian cause by the non-aligned countries.

The session adopted a Political Declaration, an Economic Declaration, a Programme of Economic Cooperation, as well as a number of resolutions of a political and economic character.

It was also agreed to keep the Coordination Bureau whose membership was supplemented as follows: Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh (which shared the term of office with Afghanistan), Botswana, Chad, Cuba, Guinea, Guayana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, the Palestine Liberation Organization, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Zaire, and Zambia.

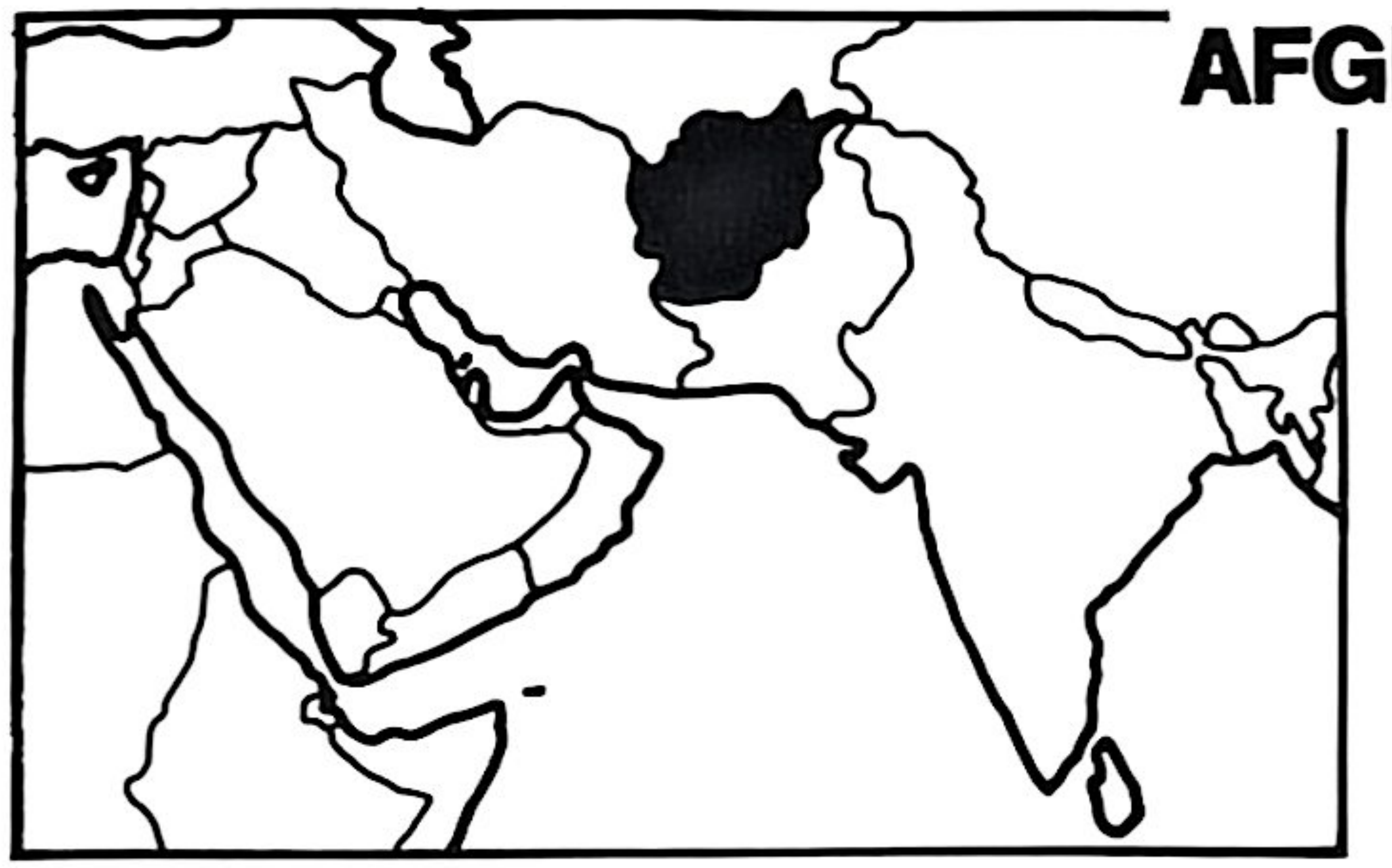
Havana was the venue of the Sixth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries, which took place from September 3 to 9, 1979. It was the largest Summit Conference held by the Movement since its founding. It was attended by 95 full members, one country with special status, 20 observers, and 19 guests. Altogether, 135 countries and movements were represented in Havana.

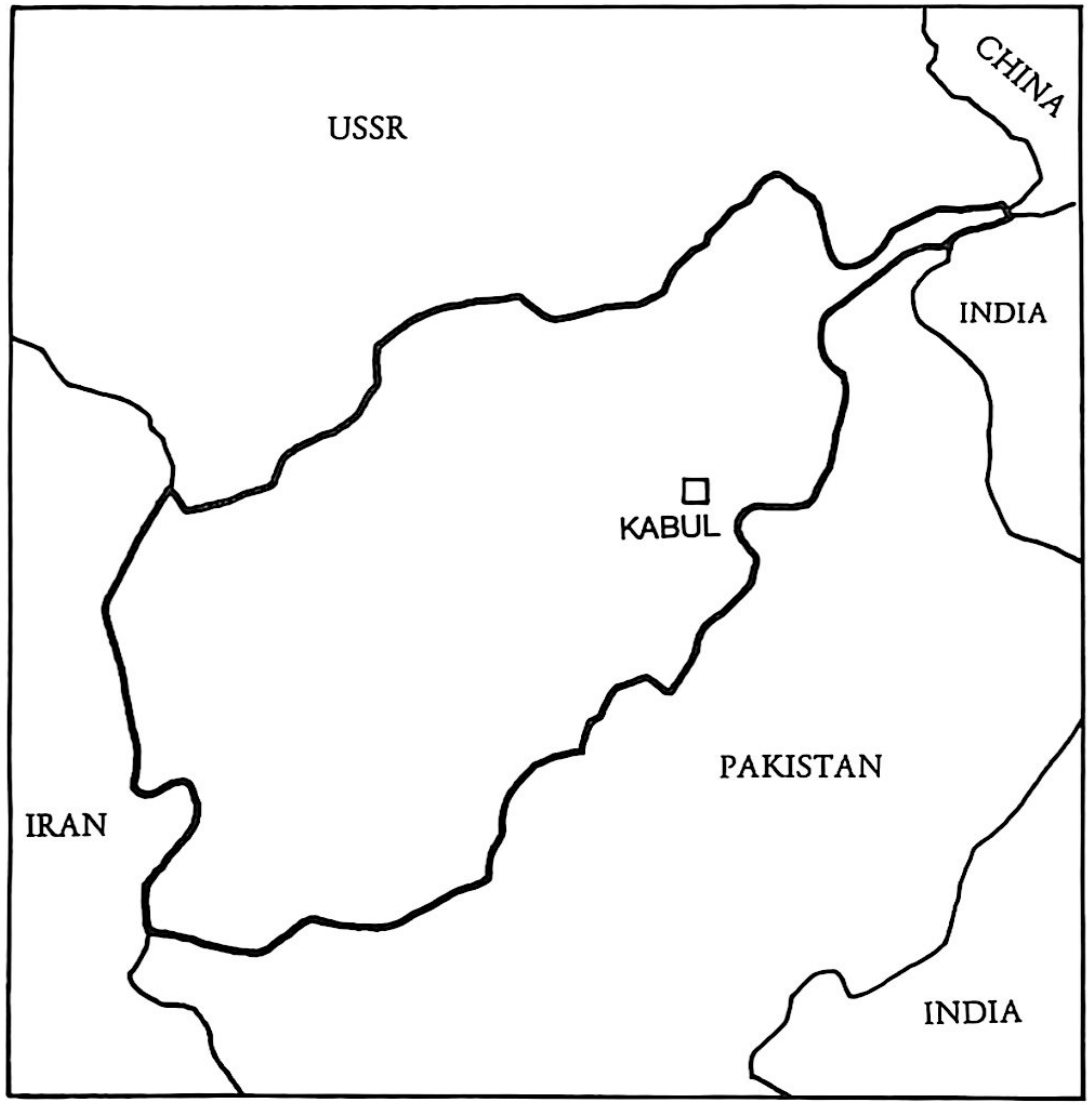
The session adopted a Political Declaration, an Economic Declaration, a Programme of Action for Economic Cooperation, and many resolutions of a political and economic character.

As agreed at the Summit Conference in Colombo, the Coodination Bureau was supplemented in the following manner: Cuba, Afghanistan (sharing the term of office with Bangladesh), Benin, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea. Cyprus (which would share the term of office with a yet unspecified country), Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, India, Iran (sharing the term of office with Bhutan), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritania, Mozambique, Nigeria, the PLO, Panama, Peru (sharing the term of office with Grenada), Singapore (sharing the term of office with Indonesia, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Syria, Togo, Uganda (sharing the term of office with Zaire), Vietnam (sharing the term of office with Laos), the Democratic Republic of Yemen, Yugoslavia and Zambia.

This is a brief outline of the history of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries up to the moment of compilation of this book. The experience gained in the course of the twenty years of existence of the movement has demonstrated that the non-aligned countries can overcome any obstacle, as they have succeeded to do thus far, knowing well that their unity in the face of the common enemy is their most valuable and powerful weapon.

AFGHANISTAN




USSR
CHINA
INDIA
KABUL
PAKISTAN
IRAN
INDIA

Official name: The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan.
Area: 647,497 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Afghanistan borders on the Soviet Union, in the south on Pakistan, in the east on China and India, and in the west on Iran.
Population: 15,540,000 inhabitants. Annual rate of population growth: 4.9% in the period 1970-1975.
Capital: Kabul (749,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Kandahar, Herat and Kunduz.
Languages: Pashto and Persian.
Public Holidays: August 19, Independence Day, April 27. Day of the Proclamation of the Democratic Revolution.
Geography: Afghanistan may be geographically divided into three distinct regions: The Hindukush range which forms an arc from the east to the west where it extends into several branches, the Band-I-Bak or Paropamir, and two large high-altitude plains in the north and in the southwest, the latter being much larger than the former. Mt. Shaitan with its 4,300 m is the highest elevation in the Hindukush whose passes lead into Kashmir and have been the historical route for peoples migrating to or invading the Indian subcontinent.

Afghanistan's three main river systems are formed by the Amu Darya (Oxus) which irrigates the northern plain and which forms part of country's frontier with the Soviet Union, the Hari-Rud whose waters irrigate the Gera Plain in the west, and the Herimand which empties into the Godizarch salt lakes in Seistan. The Afghan rivers, which are shallow and not navigable, do not provide any outlet to the sea.

The average annual rainfall varies from 177 mm in some areas to 300 mm in others. Precipitation extends from December to April. Temperature varies from the maximum of 48.8°C in the summer to the minimum of 26°C in the Hindukush during the winter season.

Brief history: Over the centuries, the territory of today's Afghanistan was settled by nomadic herdsmen and was the crossroads of human migrations as well as invading armies. The Aryans, the Persians, the Greeks, as well as Turkic and Mongol peoples, all left their traces in what is modern-day Afghanistan.

At the end of the 17th century, a feudal monarchy was formed there when a number of pastoral tribes unified.

In modern times, Afghanistan came under pressure by Imperial Russia which sought an outlet to the Indian Ocean, and by the British Empire which wanted to extend its dominion further west of the natural gateway to India in the Hindukush passes.

The first Anglo-Afghan War in 1824 ended with a humiliating defeat for the British in Kabul. A second war, fought from 1878 to 1890, resulted in the imposition of a British protectorate on the Afghan monarchy. The third and last Anglo-Afghan war ended with Afghan independence in 1919.

One of the first moves taken by the Afghan government following the country's independence was the recognition of the Soviet government and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union, which initiated a break-through of the isolation and blockade of Moscow imposed by the imperialist powers.

Although she had been forced to recognize the sovereignity of Afghanistan and the end of her political domination of that country under the Treaty of Rawalpindi, signed on August 19, 1919, Great Britain tried to maintain her political and economic influence there. Her agents succeeded in 1923 in making the Shah entrust them with the training of the Afghan army.

When World War II broke out, the government in Kabul proclaimed the neutrality of the country and refused to take part . Soon after the end of the war, Afghanistan signed a frontier agreement with the Soviet Union.

In the 1950's, the Afghan monarchy planned to introduce some social and economic reforms, and in 1957 did, in fact, launch the country's first five-year economic development plan.

In 1964 a constitution was proclaimed, establishing Afghanistan's first parliament.

The clergy and the land-owning nobility opposed in parliament all changes until a group of nationalist officers overthrew the monarchy on June 17, 1973, proclaimed a republic, and replaced the parliament by a Central Committee made up of military officers as well as civilians.

The new, republican government announced the adoption of a foreign policy of non-alignment and a domestic policy of socio-economic reforms. It abolished the old constitution of 1964, and a new constitution was enacted. An agrarian reform law was adopted in 1975.

However, the new government failed to implement the announced policy. The agrarian reform law, which was radical in its provisions, was not put into effect and the powerful feudal class retained its land holding intact. The peasantry, which accounts for 90% of the population and which was the most exploited class, felt no change in its situation.

In its foreign policy the government tended towards closer ties with the Western powers and with neighbouring Iran which was noted for its collaboration with the United States.

At the beginning of 1978, the growing internal contradictions within the country and the growing repression of the progressive sectors of the population made the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA), a Marxist-Leninist organization, withdraw its support of the government and at the head of a revolutionary movement overthrew it on April 27. A National Revolutionary Council was installed under the presidency of Nur Mohammed Taraki, the leader of the PDPA.

The new government adopted a revolutionary programme of deep social, economic and political changes, it chose new national emblems, and modified the country's name to the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. In December 1978, it signed a treaty of peace and friendship with the Soviet Union, which included a provision on mutual assistance in the case of aggression.

Almost immediately after its constitution, the revolutionary government was confronted with domestic and international reaction. The big feudal landlords affected by the transformations instituted by the government, switched to armed opposition with the open encouragement and assistance of Pakistan, China and the United States.

In April 1979, the government formed a Supreme Defence Council for the purpose of fighting the rebellion.

On September 16, 1979, Nur Mohammed Taraki was replaced by Hafizullah Amin, until then holding the office of Prime Minister in the Revolutionary Council and of Vice-Chairman of the PDPA. In December of the same year, Amin was deposed on charges of having instituted a fascist dictatorship within the PDPA and the government, and of having carried out arbitrary repression of those revolutionary cadres who did not submit to his power ambitions. Babral Karmal, who had served as Vice-Premier in the Taraki cabinet, assumed the office of President of the Revolutionary Council and Prime Minister.

The situation created by Amin in the revolutionary ranks and the growing material assistance provided by international reaction to the armed counter-revolutionary bands threatened revolutionary power, and for this reason, when Babrak Karmal assumed the leadership of the country he immediately asked the Soviet Union for military assistance under the provisions of the treaties in effect between the two countries.

This move has been exploited by the imperialist powers for waging an international campaign against the Soviet Union and Afghanistan with the objective of distorting the true character of Soviet assistance and at the same time of providing a smoke-screen for their intervention in Afghanistan's internal affairs through the organization, training and arming of counter-revolutionary bands.

Economy: Agriculture provides employement for 72% of Afghanistan's labour force and is the mainstay of the country's economy. It accounts for 50% of its GNP and for 80% of its export earnings. The principal sectors of Afghanistan's agricultaural production are livestock, wool and cotton.

More than 60% of the development assistance received by Afghanistan in 1978 came from socialist countries, the Soviet Union in particular. The remaining assistance came from the European Community, India, Japan and Iraq.

In the period 1978-1979, Afghanistan produced 2,830,000 tons of wheat, 780,000 tons of maize, 428,000 tons of rice, 325,000 tons of barley, 153,000 tons of cotton seed, and 824,000 tons of fruit. In the preceding year it reported 3,866,000 head of cattle, 22,556,000 sheep and 3,000,000 goats. Meat production in 1978 included 66,000 tons of beef, 97,000 tons of mutton, 25,000 tons of goat meat, and 11,000 tons of poultry.

Afghanistan possessses large mineral deposits which are not exploited. In this sector its main production in the period 1977-1978 included 172,700 tons of coal, 77,700 tons of unrefined salt, and 2,581,900,000 cu. m of natural gas.

Industrial production in the same period included 47,100 tons of cotton fibre, 76,800,000 m of cotton fabrics, 347,000 m of woollen fabrics, 29,700,600 m of rayon fabrics, and 125,500 tons of cement.

The national budget in the fiscal year 1977-1978 ended with a surplus of 2,782,000,000 afghans (the national currency) due to receipts worth 13,950,000,000 afghans and expenditures of 11,168,000,000 afghans. Budgetary allocations for economic development in the same fiscal year amounted to 5,060,000,000 afghans, mostly coming from foreign financial assistance. The country's GNP amounted to 146,700,000,000 afghans and its foreign-exchange reserves to 433,830,000 dollars, of which 43,270,000 dollars were in the form of gold. Afghanistan's foreign - trade balance for 1977-1978 showed a deficit of 8,654,000,000 afghans because imports worth 23,900,000,000 afghans exceeded exports which amounted to only 15,246,000,000 afghans. Its principal commercial partners in that year were the Soviet Union, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, India and Pakistan.

Government: Afghanistan has a republican form of government. Since the revolution of April 1978, a National Revolutionary council performs the duties of the government. The political line followed by the government is set by the ruling party, the Marxist-Leninist People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan (PDPA).

Afghanistan became a member of the United Nations Organization on November 19, 1946.

Armed forces: In July 1979, Afghanistan's armed forces had 80,000 men, 10,000 of them in the air force. Moreover, there are 30,000 men organized in paramilitary units. The situation caused by the revolutionary changes and armed opposition organized and financed from abroad have undoubtedly resulted in variations of these figures, and for the same reasons. the current figures have not been published.

Organization: There is only one political party, the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, established in 1964, which is inspired by Marxist-Leninist ideology and which forms the revolutionary vanguard of the country. The youth and the women of

Afghanistan have their respective organizations, the People's Youth Organization and the People's Organization of Women, both of which are guided by the PDPA.

The Central Council of Afghan Trade Unions associates all of the country's trade union organizations which represent some 160,000 workers. It is a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions. At the beginning of 1981, the Central Council of Afghan Trade Unions held the first ever trade union congress in the history of the country.

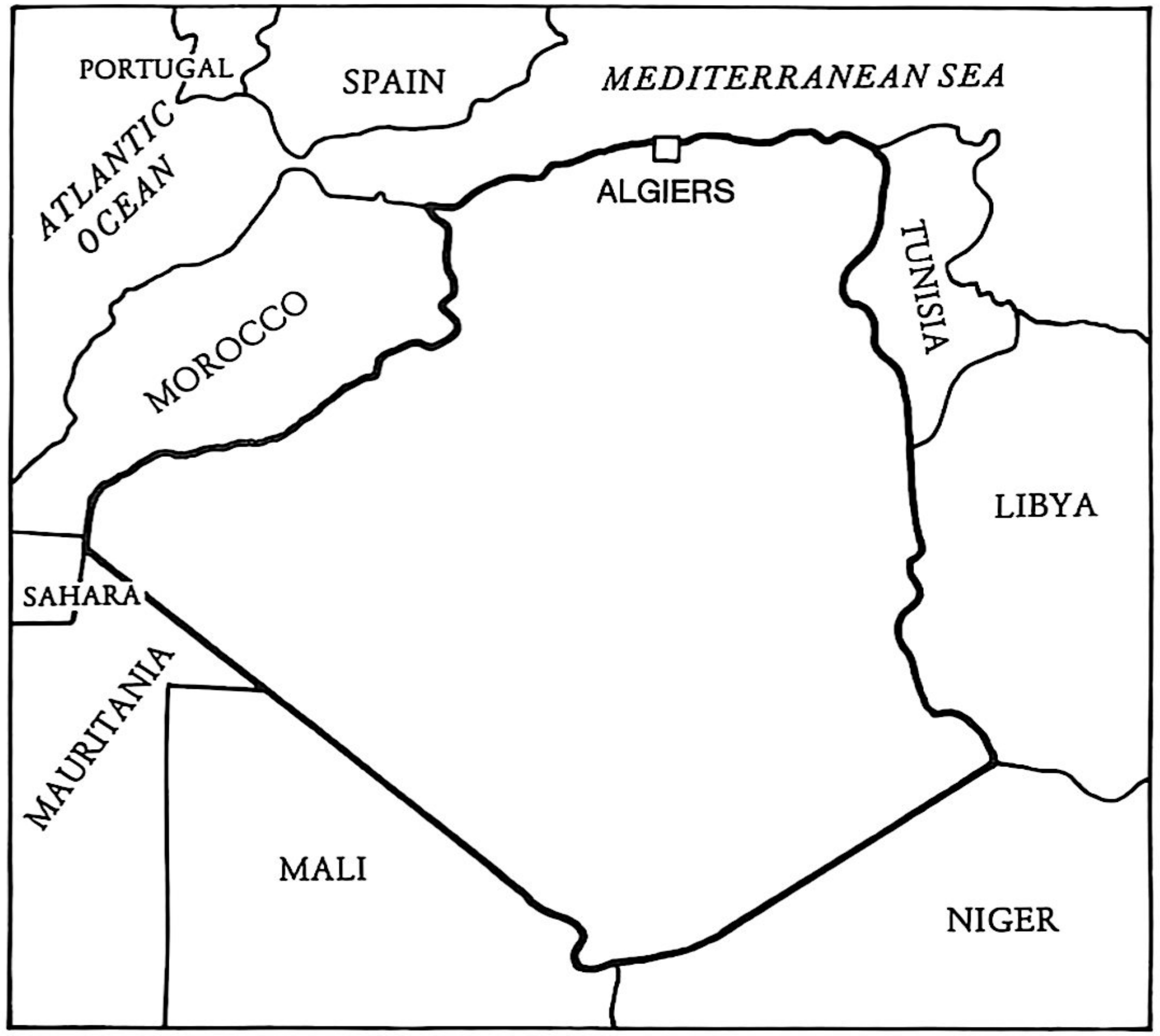
Education: The revolutionary government instituted free and compulsory primary education, and between May and July 1978, opened 400 new schools as the first step towards implementation of a large-scale plan of school construction. At the same time it began an accelerated training of teachers and organized a national literacy campaign in order to reduce the 90% illiteracy rate.

In 1978, there were 1,517 primary schools with 546,236 pupils in Afghanistan, 1,912 village schools with 148,004 pupils, 512 middle schools with 112,616 pupils, 197 pre-university schools with 59,647 students, 17 vocational schools with 5,831 students, 10 teacher-training colleges with 4,033 students, and two universities with a total student body of 8,366.

Public health: In 1978, medical care facilities in Afghanistan were concentrated in urban areas. In that year, the country had 60 hospitals with the total capacity of 3,200 beds, and just over 700 doctors.

Religion: Islam, which is the official religion in Afghanistan, is professed by 99% of the population. Sunnis are the predominant Islamic sect in the country, since they account for 80% of all Moslems living there. The remaining 19% are Shiites. There are also very small groups of Hindus, Sikhs and Jews.

ALGERIA


PORTUGAL
SPAIN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
ALGIERS
TUNISIA
MOROCCO
LIBYA
SAHARA
MAURITANIA
MALI
NIGER

Official name: The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.
Area: 2,381,741 sq. km.
Borders: In the north there are 1,200 km of Mediterranean coast, the east it borders on Tunisia and Lybia, the south on Niger and Mali, the west on the Western Sahara and Morocco
Population: 17,422,000 inhabitants (18,250,000 including immigrants) according to a 1978 census. Average population density is 7.6 inhabitants per sq. km. 10,200,000 people live in rural areas, i.e. rougly 60% of the total population. The annual rate of population growth is 3.3%. 47.5% of the population are younger than fifteen. The economically active population numbers approximately four million, 42% of whom work in agriculture (1978).

People of Arab ethnic origin represent 60% of the population, Berbers 30%, Europeans 1%.
Capital: Algiers (1,500,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Oran, Constantine, Tlemcen, Annaba and Mostaganen.
Languages: Arabic is the official language, although a large part of the population in the interior speaks Berber dialects. French is used mainly in the urban centres.
Public holidays: July 5, Independence Day; November 1, Anniversary of the Revolution.
Geography: Algeria lies between latitudes 18° 55' and 37° 10' north. After Sudan it is the largest African country and is the largest of the three North African countries known as the Maghreb. The two others are Tunisia and Morocco.

There are considerable contrasts between Algeria's northern region, which includes the Atlas range, and the vast desert areas in the south, which constitute four-fifths of the country's total area and which are part of the great expanse of the Sahara Desert.

There are few rivers and those that exist have a little water. Many are dry amost the whole year round and only become active during the winter rains. The Cheliff (692 km) is Algeria's only permanent river. There are also the Medjerda and Mellegue coastal rivers in the eastern part of the country, and the Isser which empties into the Mediterranean Sea near Algiers. The 1,200 km of Algeria's Mediterranean coast are rugged and not easily accessible.

The Atlas range has two chains running from the west to the east. In the coastal areas is the Tell Atlas range, while on the edge of the Sahara is the Saharan Atlas. Between the two ranges is a large, high-lying plateau. Longitudinal depressions cut through the mountains in which there are also numerous valleys. Behind the coastal hills are low plains with inadequate drainage towards the sea. In the interior, the Kabylia Massif of Djurdjura includes peaks exceeding 2,000 metres. The Tell Atlas range slopes gently from the east to the west and from the southeast to the northeast. This range includes Mt. Tlemcen, the Djebel Oursenis (1,986 m) and the Blida Atlas which ties on to the high plateau of Constantine. There are some depressions in this area, such as those of Siddi bel Abbes, Tiaret, Satif, Constantine and Guelma. There are also many lakes. The plateau extends in the south from the east to the west and is rimmed by the eastern mountain ranges until it ends roughly at Lake Hodna. In the east rises the limestone massif of the Aures. In the south of the Saharan Atlas, the range rises to its tallest peaks in the east and the west. They are covered with many dunes studded with trees, while the plains, consisting of alluvial deposits, are eroded from the nearby mountain ranges. To the south is the Hoggar (Ahaggar) mountain range, with many peaks of volcanic origin exceeding 3,000 metres in height. These peaks overlook vast, rocky plains—the Tenezrouft, the most arid part of the Sahara Desert.

The topography of the country, where areas with sufficient humidity alternate with areas which are extremely arid, determines its peculiar and diversified climate.

On the Mediterranean coast the temperature varies from 13° Centigrade to 24° Centigrade. The period from June to September is warm and the humidity is high. This is the Algerian summer. It is the, when the fearsome *sirocco*—the desert wind—sweeps in from the Sahara, raising the day temperature to as high as 27° Centigrade to 32° Centigrade. The rain comes mostly in May and there is also heavy rain between November and February. In the south, in the Sahara, the temperature rises to as high as 43° Centigrade during the day, but it may drop at night to as low as 10° Centigrade below zero.

As already noted, the rivers are few and the country is threatened by erosion due to the devastation of the forests by the colonialists and their burning by napalm used by French armed forces. The Algerian government has been planting 10,000 hectares of land with trees every year in the areas bordering on the desert and is pursuing a policy of exploitation of the country's water resources by the construction of dams mainly for irrigation purposes. Under the second four-year plan (1974-1977), 4,800 million dinars were spent on the construction of water conservancy and utilization projects.
Brief history: Algeria's territory has been inhabited since times immemorial. This is demonstrated by finds of human skulls more than 300,000 years old and of tools used by human beings who had lived there millions of years ago.

In Antiquity, the whole of Northern Africa was called Libya and its central part, that of Algeria, was known as Numidia.

In the 6th century B.C. the Phoenicians colonized the coastal area west of Tunis and made Carthage their capital. The Phoenicians built a number of ports there.

In the 3rd century B.C., Numidia was ruled by two kings—Sifax, who was allied with the Carthaginians, and Masinisa (238-149), an ally of the Romans. Masinisa succeeded in unifying the two Numidian kingdoms at the end of the Phoenician domination of the area. During his reign he consolidated and stabilized his kingdom, whose capital was Constantine, and spurred its economic growth. When Carthage finally fell, the Romans turned its former territory into their province – Africa. Algeria ruled by descendants of Mesinisa, retained its independence until the 1st century A.D. Rome was defeated by the Vandals and they, in turn, by the Byzantines. In the 7th century, North Africa embraced a new culture. When the Arabs brought with them a civilization that surpassed the achievements of the world of Antiquity, as well as a new religion, Islam. The character of the Maghreb was shaped in that era. Its basic features arise from its identity with the Arab-Moslem world as well as from its geographical position in the extreme west of that world and from the constant challenge it was to face over the centuries from the nearby and frequently hostile Europe.

The Arab cultural and economic influence was notable advancement for the country, but the Maghreb communities decayed just as the old dynasties had.

At the beginning of the 19th century the coastal cities became hide-outs for European privateers and their population declined. In the interior, the Turks could never completely subdue the local inhabitants. Led by their tribal chief, they persistently resisted the Turkish conquest and under the leadership of tribal authority and its extension, a period of relative economic prosperity set in.

In the midst of the European disputes over control of the Mediterranean, a British fleet bombarded Algiers in 1816.

Subsequently, the French intervened, using as pretext an alleged insult of the French Consul by the Dey—the Governor of Algiers—in 1827. On July 5, 1830, Algeria was invaded by the French and the Dey, together with most of the Turkish officers, were exiled. Four years later, the French government decided—on the recommendations of a special commission—to conquer and annex Algeria, and a Governor General was appointed to implement the plan. The resistance put up by the Algerians was long. Constantine, which had been severely oppressed by the Turks, was captured in 1837 and by 1841 French rule was consolidated in most of the country's ports and their vicinity. Three years later most of Algeria fell under French control, but in the west the invaders ran into formidable opposition by the Berber leader, Emir Abd-el-Khader, who had declared war on France in 1839, having forged a union between the Berbers and the Arab for this purpose. Abd-el-Khader, whom Algerians view as their national hero, finally fell in 1847.

Between 1848 and 1850 there were many rebellions by the people against the European occupation. They would not accept the conquest of their country as a fait accompli and refused to relinquish their nationality, their rights, their language and their native customs. In 1848, Frence decreed that "Algeria forms a part of French territory". However, in its practical implementation, this law was applied to the land only, not to its native inhabitants who were politically and legally ignored although they numbered approximately two million. All that the government in Paris allowed them to do was to work under slave-like conditions, pay heavy taxes and fight under the French flag. French inmigration soon began to grow and in no time some 50,000 "colons" owned most of the farmland and prosperous businesses. Other Europeans, too—Italians, Spaniards and Maltese—rushed in to grab what they could. In 1889, the French National Assembly passed a law which granted French citizenship to all foreigners born on Algerian soil, if they had done military service in the occupation army. The natives themselves, however were relegated to the status of foreigners in their own land. Even instruction in Arabic was banned in the schools, where classes were given in French only. All these absurdities and deformations reached their extreme in the field of history with assertions that Algeria's history had begun in 1830 and with the native children being forced to recite in French: "Our ancesters, the Gauls, had long hair". Long, too, was the period of oppressive colonialism.

The fall and imprisonment of Napoleon III had strong repercussions in Algeria, where it offered the native inhabitants the opportunity to rise against their oppressors in a widespread insurgency, for which they had aspired over the previous forty years and which caused serious concern to the colonial power, although only for a little more than one year. At that time, the French had to muster most of their troops to fight in the Prussian War (1870-1871) and not many forces were left in Algeria to crush promptly any uprising in the occupied areas of the Arab north. Some 600.000 Algerians took part in the uprising, which erupted mainly in Constantine, Great Kabylia and Oran. Sheikh El Haddar led the popular rebellion. In October 1870, Chartyas warriors appeared in the Biskra region and later advanced towards Milia, Beni-Tlilan and Beni-Menacour. In the communities they ruled, they replaced the colonial or French-controlled authorities, seized the property of those who collaborated with the French, collected taxes, meted out justice, and maintained a rigid discipline required for clandestine operations. They actually sowed the seeds of subsequent revolutionary outbreaks. They were known as the League of Peasants and Proletarians. Months before, in January, there was a rebellion of the Hanencha tribes along the Algerian-Tunisian frontier, as well as uprisings in the areas of Souk Ahras and Tebessa, inspired by Mahieddine, the son of the legendary Emir and national hero Abd-el-Khader. Subsequently Great Kabylia joined the movement. Meanwhile, in the cities, a silent campaign of disobedience was under way in protest against the colonial regime, and in the markets, cafes and communal baths there was open talk of an imminent insurrection. The nobility, who felt threatened by the expansion of the colonial system, also joined the rebellion. They were led by Sheikh El Mokrani, who later joined forces with Rahmanyas of Sheikh Ouled Sidi, who accepted and respected moral authority. This insurrection, which at its outset had an aristocratic and limited character, steadily grew in intensity and eventually became a popular, national uprising. In their later statements, trying to justify themselves, some high-ranking French officers admitted that the uprising had shown a "spirit of nationality and independence". Although they were inadequately armed, the Algerians seized the whole coastal region, but, eventually, the French brought in large reinforcements and after fierce fighting managed to overcome the resistance. Their victory was followed by a wave of barbarous repression of the population.

Faithful to their intentions the French massacred entire villages and urban districts, and, in addition, confiscated 450,000 hectares of land for distribution among new "colons". Moreover, they exacted from the tribes an indemnity of 65 million gold francs, a sum representing more than 70% of the tribal possessions.

In May 1871, fighting the colonial troops, Sheikh El Mokrani, one of the Algerians' military leaders, was killed. His brother, known as Boumezrang, was captured in January 1872 and was sent to New Caledonia for thirty years penal servitude. In March 1873, yet another leader of the Algerian uprising, Bouchocha, was wounded in battle and was captured in the village of El Milok. Two years later the French executed him near Constantine.

Stubborn resistance continued for ten years under the leadership of Sidi El Ala of the Ouled Sidi Cheikh tribe. The French had used artillery to keep the insurgents confined in the rugged mountains and remote desert areas, but the movement once again grew in strength in spite of the brutality and merciless represssion by the colonial authorities. For another decade the Algerians heroically fought back in one form or in another. However, in the subsequent thirty years the extermination of the rebellious sheikhs and officially sanctioned terror succeeded in achieving apparent peace—albeit very relative at times—but they failed to wipe out the quest for independence or the Algerians' national identity.

In 1914, when World War I broke out, Algeria was one of France's largest and oldest colonies, since it had been under French domination for some ninety years. Moreover, it was first among the French overseas possessions in term of foreign, mainly French, investments as well as in the number of European colonizers, or "colons". In fact, nearly half of the French capital invested in the colonies was to be found in Algeria. However, this wealth of invested capital benefited only foreign companies, which extracted vast profits year after year but invested nothing in return for the benefit of the exploited Algerian people. There was practically no local industry and the colonialists concentrated mainly on iron-ore and phosphorus extraction in addition to some weaving and food processing. So little of Algeria's labour force was employed in industry, that at the beginning of the 1920s there were less than 100,000 industrial workers among a population of some six million. Moreover, the local workers were employed as unskilled labourers and were paid only a fourth of the wages paid to Europeans doing the same work. The local consumer industry was wiped out by competition from French monopolies and the dumping practices they employed, Thousands of artisans were forced into unemployement in Algiers, Constantine, Oran, Tlemcen and other towns. The national bourgeoisie was extremely weak and only a handful of big businessmen prospered in the shadow of the foreign companies and colonial authorities. The mining enterprises and large industrial plants were owned by multinational corporations. For example, a single French monopoly controlled the entire crop and livestock production, owning approximately the three million hectares of land. At the same time, the feudal system still survived, so that the peasant was exploited both by the foreign capitalist and the native landlord. The French did not limit themselves to economic domination alone, but replaced every earlier form of native and local government, and imposed on the country an all-pervasive colonial administration which was upheld by military force. While the Europeans enjoyed the wealth of Algeria and all rights, the Algerians were not considered citizens, but rather as subjects of the French, and were treated as an inferior race. A "Native Code" deprived them of all civil rights and considerations as human beings. They were not permitted to travel freely in their own country, were subject to corporal punishment and had no right of appeal against judicial decisions. In their drive to deprive the Algerians of their national identity, the French colonial authorities closed down Arab schools and newspapers, leaving only one university for training high-level bureaucratic personnel who were almost in every case Europeans. Soon, more than 90% of all Arabs and Berbers were unable to read or write.

The shortage of labour in French industry during World War I motivated the dispatch of some 120,000 Algerian workers to France. Later this figure rose to 400,000, of whom military authorities recruited 175,000 to serve in the French army. When these men returned to Algeria, they brought with them revolutionary ideas and became a catalyst for a mass resurgence of national consciousness.

On February 4, 1919, the colonialists promulgated a law which favoured the landlords and industrialists, while making some concessions to civil servants who had French diplomas or decorations, and granted everybody, including soldiers from the metropolitan country, the right to elect members of municipal or departmental councils, but never more than one-third of the total number of the seats in each council. The reform did not satisfy even the native bourgeoisie, which was demanding universal suffrage, Algerian representation in the French National Assembly, and repeal of the "Native Code", a straightforward colonial measure. In 1920, a nationalist-reformist organization — the Algerian Youth — pressed for the realization of these demands. It was headed by Emir Khaled, the nephew of the national hero, Abd-el-Khader, who was a captain in the French Army. But in 1923 Emir Khaled was deported and the organization fell apart.

The first Algerian political party with popular roots came into being in Paris three years later. Calling itself the North African Star, it promoted its ideas in its newspapers *El Ikdam Nord-Africain* and *El Ouma*. Both papers took part one year later in the Anti-Colonialist Congress held in Brussels. The movement grew in strength among Algerians who had emigrated to France in search of work.

In 1927 a Federation of Moslem Delegates came into being with branches in practically all the French administrative departments. Its headquarters were in the city of Constantine and it was headed by Mohammed Benjelloul, a noted leader of the nationalist movement. The organization called for the granting of the same rights to the native bourgeoisie as those enjoyed by the European businessmen. It was not opposed to cultural absorption by France, but demanded equality with the French. However, under popular pressure, the Federation eventually had to support the development of the nationalist movement.

In the same year, a Federation of the Elected, headed by Ben-Djelluh and Bentami, was established.

In 1931, the Oulemas Association was formed. It was nationalist in character and was active in the cultural and religious spheres.

The North African Star Party, founded by Arab emigres in Paris in 1926, began to establish its organizations in Algeria ten years later and subsequently changed its name to the Algerian People's Party. The colonial authorities banned it in 1939. Nevertheless, many artisans, students and urban workers joined this organization, which was then headed by Massali Hadj. In the same period, the Algerian Communist Party held its constituent congress and subseqently adopted a platform of defence of the proletariat and open struggle against colonial oppression and social exploitation.

In 1943 an Algerian People's Manifesto was circulated. In this document the intellectuals and the urban petty-bougeoisie condemned colonialism and called for its abolition. They also proclaimed the people's right to determine their own future, and called for other measures of a progressive character, including the use of Arabic as an official language. Later they issued the "Reform Project", in which they demanded the formation of an Algerian state at the end of World War II and the holding of elections for a democratic Constitutent Assembly. The signatories of these two documents called for the participation of Algerians in the administration of their own country, the release of political prisoners, and a number of social-economic reforms. However, nothing changed.

In June 1943 the National Committee for the Liberation of France assumed power in Algeria and established on its territory an army for liberating France from the Nazis. In the resistance movement in France, the Communists played a leading role and urged General de Gaulle to legalize the Algerian Communist Party. A National Party Conference was held on August 15, at which the people were urged to join the struggle against fascism. The appeal had an immediate success and by the end of the war no fewer than 300,000 Algerians were fighting under the banners of the French army of liberation, firmly believing that once Hitler's hordes were defeated, their country would finally get its independence. However, the French ruling circles ignored the just demands of the Algerian people and turned down the People's Manifesto and the "Reform Project". In order to stem the tide of liberation in Algeria, they merely granted some partial concessions. A colonial decree issued on March 7, 1944, guaranteed to Algerians over the age of twenty-one the right to vote and to elect 40 per cent of the members of governing bodies on the municipal and national levels. In these bodies Algerians were in the minority and the executive decisions remained in the hands of the colonial authorities. Workers, radical elements of the national bourgeoisie and progressive intellectuals came out against this policy of minor concessions. At that point, the association of Friends of the Manifesto and Freedom was formed by the signatories of the original document, the Algerian People's Party and the Oulemas Association. Soon the new organization had more than half a million members. Thus far, no political association had had such widespread influence among the Algerian people.

Then the deep economic crisis broke out. It began with a poor cereal harvest (350,000 tons) which represented barely 14% of the 1939 crop. Sheep flocks dropped to half their normal size. Vine-growers dismissed thousands of farm labourers and reduced the area of their vineyards. Hundreds of thousands of peasants moved to the cities in search of a livelihood which they could no longer make in their own milieu. However, there were no jobs for them in the cities either, although munitions plants had increased their production for the French armed forces. The situation was further aggravated when the colonial administration began to control the distribution of food. French officials went into black market operations with food originally intended for public consumption and gave preference to European clients.

The fall of Nazi Germany was celebrated with great joy in Algiers on May 8, 1945, with the people also calling for an end to French colonial domination, for national independence, and for stricter and more effective economic measures to end the crisis plaguing the country. What the Algerians were demanding was simply the application to their country of the principles enunciated in the Atlantic Charter. But the French authorities ignored the effective help they had received from the Algerian soldiers during the war and suppressed popular demonstrations. Thus, in the towns of Setif and Guelma the French police and colonial troops fired on demonstrations for three days. More than 40,000

Algerians fell victim to the shooting and to strafing from planes and armoured cars. The massacre steeled the people and the protests spread to the district of Constantine in Algeria's eastern region. In Kabylia and the adjacent districts uprisings broke out. The insurgents attacked the estates of the big "colons", police headquarters and barracks, and destroyed communications and railway lines. However, within three weeks the colonialists succeeded in crushing the uprising and tens of thosuands of dead were added to the already long list of victims of the repression. The big "colons" formed paramilitary units and thousands of patriots were arrested. At least 4,500 persons joined the already large number of detainees, among them many well-known nationalist leaders. The Association of Friends of the Manifesto and Freedom was disbanded and the Algerian People's Party, just as the Communist Party, went underground. However, all these repressive measures only made the people of Algeria more determined to resort to a war of national liberation as the only solution for them.

In the decade that followed the end of World War II, the transnational corporations established in the country stepped up their exploitation of Algeria's natural resources and of the Arab workers, thus raising their profits in geometric progression. Algeria's dependence on the French market for consumer goods also increased. Workers saw their ranks swelled by medium and small peasants displaced from their land by the landlords and foreign agricultural enterprises.

In March 1946 the French Constituent Assembly passed a motion submitted by the Communist Party, which granted amnesty to political prisoners in Algeria. In the same month, a Democratic Union for the Algerian Manifesto was founded, made up mostly of the nationalist bourgeoisie and progressive intelligentsia, but it also enjoyed support among the peasants. In November a Movement for the Victory of Democratic Freedoms was established on the basis of the outlawed Algerian People's Party. Its membership consisted of small businessmen, artisans, office employees, students and some workers. In some regions it was also supported by peasants. The movement called for the establishment of an independent republic. However, the most reactionary circles in France rejected an Algerian Statute that provided for the creation of an autonomous or independent republic in Algeria. This happened at the time when reactionary forces were on the rise in France. Nevertheless, on September 20, 1947, the Statute was published and put into effect. It stated that Algeria was a grouping of administrative departments with financial autonomy and a special form of organization. It somewhat differed from the old, colonial-type administration, but all effective power still remained in the hands of the Governor-General, who was appointed by France. He was assisted by an Assembly of Deputies of 120 members, which in turn was divided into two legislative bodies. The first one was elected by 370,000 Europeans and 60,000 Algerians from the privileged classes. The second body, which was to have an equal number of seats, was to be elected by 1,300,000 Algerian voters. Moreover, the Statute contemplated certain reforms such as the elimination of the military government in the southern part of the country, acceptance of Arabic as an official language on a par with French, and some other minor concessions. However, all these provisions were thrown aside by colonial reaction and repression was increased in the attempt to paralyse any new sign of rebellion. More than 30,000 Algerian patriots were arrested and imprisoned in the course of the subsequent ten years. In practice, the activities of all political parties and workers' organizations were suppressed. During the same period France came under the politico-economic influence of the U.S.-initiated Marshall Plan and joined the militaristic NATO pact, whose impact was also felt in the French colonies. Moreover, United States capital began its penetration of Algeria, especially in the area of petroleum prospecting and search for other strategic raw materials. The situation reached a point where the Algerians became fully convinced that the French colonialists would not voluntarily give up their spoils.

The leaders of the nationalist political organizations agreed to forge the unity of the progressive forces in a broadly based political camp and formed the Algerian Front for the Defence of and Respect for Freedom, which included among other organizations the Democratic Union, the Movement for the Victory of Democratic Freedoms (MTLD), the Oulemas Association and the Communist Party. In December 1947, guerilla groups began to operate in the mountains of Kabylia and Aures. In order to spread the insurrection, the MTLD organized in March 1954 a Revolutionary Committee for Unity and Action, which was of a clandestine character. This Committee divided Algeria ihto *willayas* (provinces) and appointed commanders for each such province. During the night of November 1, 1954, the Committee called for a popular uprising in a move which marked the beginning of the anti-feudal and anti-imperialist Algerian revolution with the character of a people's revolution.

Fighting began in Aures, south of Constantine, and on November 12, it also broke out in the mountainous region of Great Kabylia, in the eastern part of Algeria. From then on, the guerilla units waged a war against the French colonial administration. They called themselves the National Liberation Army (ALN) and were under the command of the National Liberation Front (FLN). The front was a broadly based democratic organization which gradually rallied to its banners peasants, workers, petty-bourgeois elements, the progressive intelligentsia and radical groups of the middle bourgeoisie.

In July 1956 the FLN announced the principles underlying its struggle. They included abolition of the colonial regime, the establishment in Algeria of a democratic, socially-oriented republic, as well as distribution of the land to the peasants. The division of the country into *willayas* was preserved, each having its military commander, who acted independently and directed the formation of local revolutionary government in the liberated areas. This organization was required by the clandestine character of the struggle and by the specific nature of the individual regions. At that time the total size of the FLN forces was some 50,000 men, who had to face 400,000 regular French army troops deployed in Algeria. In January 1957, a six-day general strike was called in support of the guerilla struggle.

The United Nations took up the Algerian problem for the second time in 1957, and the General Assembly passed a resolution calling for a "peaceful, democratic and just solution". Ten months later it discussed the Algerian problem for the third time and the resolution it adopted on that occasion expressed "concern" over the situation in the country. Very real concern was felt, of course, by the French colonial authorities in the face of the victories scored by the Algerian fighters. In 1958 their number had grown to 130,000 men, 60,000 of whom were organized in permanent units and 70,000 operated as night-time guerillas, who during the day were engaged in seemingly normal work. On her part, France had re-inforced her army to more than 800,000 men. On September 19, 1958, a Provisional Government of the Algerian Revolution (GPRA) was formed and one week later issued a political declaration which underlined the United Nations Charter and The Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the foundation of Algeria's policy and as guidelines for its government. The provisional Government was immediately recognized by 17 nations.

At the end of 1958, the United Nations once again dealt with the Algerian problem as the key problem of the 13th session of its General Assembly, but France torpedoed the adoption of any new agreement, although the general consensus of the session favoured Algeria. In the course of the next two years the French launched several offensives against the Algerian liberation fighters without achieving their objectives, and, on the other hand, suffered great losses in Kabylia, Algiers and Constantine. Meanwhile, repression continued in the villages and towns, as did the torture of Algerian prisoners.

In January 1960 the French "colons" settled in Algeria funded the Secret Army Organization (OAS), made up of deserters from the Foreign Legion and the French army. The OAS centred its activities on assassination of opponents of the colonial regime and tried to terrorize the population.

In the face of the growing losses of men and military equipment, and the high cost of waging a colonial war, together with the world-wide solidarity with the Algerian people, the French government was forced to recognize Algeria's right to self-determination, but at the same time tried to prevent FLN participation in the talks. On June 25, 1960, French-Algerian negotiation began in the French town of Melun and ended four days later without any agreement. during the rest of the year the French manoeuvred to avoid new negotiations while trying to crush the ALN as a military force and the FLN as the people's political organization. They launched several offensives against the Algerians in the Daia and Ouarsenis mountains and south of Oran, but without success for the colonial forces. On January 8, 1961, a popular referendum was held in France, in which President de Gaulle asked the voters to express their views on the solution of the Algerian problem through self-determination.

The vote for self-determination was overwhelming. On May 20, 1961, the French stopped their military operations in Algeria as talks with the Algerians opened in the town of Evian. On July 5, a general strike took place in Algeria, paralyzing all life. Hundreds of Algerians died in the streets when demonstrating against the colonial regime and the French attempt to split the Saharan region away from Algeria. Then the French resumed the talks for a brief period but again without result. In October, more than 30,000 Algerian exiles marched through the streets in Paris, demanding their country's independence. A similar demonstration in Algiers was brutally repressed by the French police who killed eight demonstrators and wounded hundreds of people.

On March 7, 1962, new French-Algerian talks opened in Evian and this time produced a cease-fire agreement after eleven days. Some 1,500,000 Algerians had died in combat or as victims of French repression or torture, not to mention the two thousand victims of assassination by the OAS. That organization continued its terrorist operations after the cease-fire. Shortly after the agreement it caused the death of more than 60 people and the wounding of another 120, when it exploded a dynamite-loaded car on a quay in Algiers. On June 4, the National Revolutionary Council outlined in the so-called Tripoli Charter its programme for implementing the democratic and popular revolution, and on July 1, 99.6% of adult Algerians voted for self-determination in a popular referendum. Two days later the French government recognized Algeria's independence.

In August 1962, the Provisional Government and the FLN signed an agreement on the division of political, executive and administrative powers, and a few days later the GPRA turned over all its powers to the FLN. On September 25, the Constituent National Assembly held its first meeting and received its authority from the Provisional Government. At that point the people's Democratic Republic of Algeria was proclaimed.

In March 1963, the state assumed control over the industrial, agricultural and commercial enterprises which had been abandoned by their French owners, and in July the Algerian government approved the election of 1,391 self-administration committees in rural communities. Discussions began at that time on the first Algerian constitution, which was adopted at the end of the next month and ratified in a popular referendum.

In the night of October 13, 1963, Moroccan troops crossed the Algerian frontier some 400 km southwest of the town of Colomb-Bechar and threatened to attack the posts of Hassi Beida and Tindjuub, some 30 km inside Algeria. The Algerian army inmediately counter-attacked, contained and repulsed the Moroccan invasion at several points along the front line. In the Sordj-Lotfi sector, the Algerian forces under the command of Colonel Houari Boumedienne recaptured Hassis Beida and Tindjoub, the two places where the Moroccan government had sent most of its troops. Then, on October 25, the Algerian forces launched a general counter-offensive and circled the Moroccan troops. One week later a cease-fire was agreed upon. At the end of the year, an arbitration commission met in the Ivory Coast to seek a peaceful solution to the Algerian-Moroccan frontier conflict. The results were submitted two months later to the General Conference of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for consideration.

In 1964, special tribunals were set up to try cases of crimes against the revolution and public order. In April of that year, the FLN held its first congress, which was attended by more than a thousand delegates. At the end of its session, it embodied in a document called the Algjers Charter the fundamental theoretical principles underlying the system which had been earlier outlined in a number of documents. The congress considered them, approved them and summed them up in the Charter. Elections to the second National Assembly were held in September.

On June 19, 1965, a Revolutionary Council was formed, consisting of 15 members and headed by Colonel Houari Boumedienne, following the deposition of President Ahmed Ben Bella. At a subsequent meeting of FLN officials, Boumedienne criticized the leadership for having isolated themselves from the masses in the first stage of the revolution. He stressed that the FLN could not be firm and strong unless it represented the nation and effectively mobilized the country's revolutionary forces.

The next year, the Algerian government nationalized the iron, copper, zinc and phosphate mines which had been owned by foreign corporations, as well as insurance companies.

In the same year, the FLN began its reorganization from the bottom to the top.

The first elections to the Communal Assemblies took place in February 1967. That year, too, the Council of Ministers adopted regulations governing the operation of the markets. It also ratified by decree the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Descrimination. Later in the year, the nationwide transportation companies and five oil companies, which were subsidiaries of U.S. oil monopolies, were nationalized.

Banking operation involving foreign countries were also placed under state control. At the end of 1967, President Boumedienne took command of the Algerian armed forces which then took over the former French military base of Mers El Kebir. The policy of nationalization and recovery of Algerian natural resources continued with the complete state control of oil resources and of the engineering, construction, chemical and successively all the key sectors of the national economy.

People's Assemblies in 15 *willayas* were constituted in 1969 for a five-year term. Non-French foreign companies were nationalized in 1970 and the next year the process of placing under state control all of the country's oil and natural gas resources was completed. Then, the agrarian revolution was launched and a study of a Charter of Socialist Organization of Enterprises was concluded. An Agrarian Reform Law began to be implemented in 1972, when agricultural cooperatives were founded and President Boumedienne put into effect the first round of distribution of land to the peasants.

On September 5 to 9, 1973, the Fourth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries met in Algiers with the active participation of the Algerian President. The conference was attended by 75 member-states, eight observers, twelve national liberation movements, nine invited countries, and sixteen international organizations with observer status.

In 1976, the Revolutionary Council and the Council of Ministers adopted a policy of full-scale cooperation with Angola until the victory of the Angolan people. In the same year, the Algerian President urged the non-aligned countries to support the government of Mozambique in its confrontation with the racists in Rhodesia. In November, the first socialist-type constitution was adopted when 99.58 per cent of Algerians voted in its favour. On December 10, 1976, the people of Algeria re-elected President Boumedienne for another term by a majority of 99.18 per cent of the votes cast. In February 1977, the first National People's Assembly was constituted by the election of 261 of its members. Its final session was concluded with a speech by the president. In 1977, the National Councils held a number of meetings and the public organizations operating in Algeria held their national congresses. Also in that time same year, Algeria's third Four-Year Plan ended.

On December 27, 1978, Houari Boumedienne died. On January 27, 1979, the FLN opened its National Congress, and on February 9, Chadli Benjedid, until then member of the Military Council and Minister of Defence, was elected President.

Economy: Algeria's national economy is based on agriculture and mining, in particular the extraction of petroleum and natural gas which provide the bulk of the country's earnings and the financial basis for its economic development. In agriculture, 552,000 hectares out of the total of 6,240,000 hectares of land lending itself to cultivation were worked in 1970 by 56 per cent (1,875,000 persons) of the economically active population, which was estimated at 3,369,000 persons. The farming areas where an agrarian reform was initiated on July 14, 1971, produced in the 1975-1976 season 588,700 tons of barley, 594,000 tons of oats, 1,035,600 tons of wheat, 492,900 tons of potatoes, 520,900 tons of citrus fruit, 45,500 tons of sugar beet, 221,000 tons of olives, 378,300 hectolitres of wine, in addition to other crops for local consumption. In livestock production there were in 1976 one million head of cattle, 9.3 million sheep, 2.1 million goats, and 185,000 camels.

The sub-soil, especially in the Saharan region, is rich in petroleum and natural gas; 57,200,000 tons of the former and 6,600,000,000 cu.m of the latter were extracted in 1977. Reserves of both fuels are estimated at 1,200,000,000 tons of petroleum and 7,100,000,000,000 cu.m of natural gas. There are also deposits of iron ore (2,700,000 tons were produced in 1976), lead, zinc, antimony and phosphate rock. Earnings from petroleum and natural gas sales, the utilization of both fuels, and assistance from the socialist countries have enabled Algeria to build a metallurgical industry, which is being steadily expanded, as well as plants producing machine-tools and other industrial equipment. Cement production amounted to 1,329,600 tons in 1976, when the output of electricity reached 3,96,000,000 kWh. Algeria's oil-refining capacity was 5,360,000 tons in 1973. In 1976, Algeria had 78 merchant vessels, and the shipping industry provided jobs for 246,432 workers.

According to available data, Algeria's gross national product was valued at 14,842,865 dollars in 1976. Its 1977 foreign exchange reserves amounted to 1,917,000,000 dollars. In that year Algeria's balance of trade showed a deficit of 104,584,882 dollars, produced by imports worth 5,482,775,712 dollars and exports of 5,378,190,830 dollars, of which petroleum exports amounted to 4,934,076,828 dollars. The 1974 national budget closed with a surplus of 486,509,758 dollars, due to 5,681,209,337 dollars of income and 5,194,699,579 dollars of expenditures.

Algeria's gross national product is growing at a very high rate. While growth amounted to 4% in 1974, in 1977 it stood at 8.8%, and forecasts for 1982 envisage a 9% annual growth.

The national currency is the dinar. In November 1979, its rate of exchange was 3.84 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Algeria is a People's Democratic Republic. The National Charter, adopted by a popular referendum on June 27, 1976, is "the supreme source of the nation's policy and of the laws of the State".

The constitution, also adopted by a referendum, on November 19, 1976, is the legal and constitutional expression of the National Charter.

The head of state and government is the President, who is elected by popular vote and secret ballot for a term of five years. The National Assembly is endowed with legislative power and its members are elected for a term of four years. The cabinet is made up of twenty ministers and is presided over by the President and two Secretaries of State.

The country is divided administratively into fifteen provinces—*willayas*—and each province is again divided into communities. There are 676 communities.

The People's Assemblies are the basic institutions of the state. They are established in each community, *willaya* and on the national level, and permit the participation of the people in the administration and organization of the country.

Organizations: The National Liberation Front (FLN) is the sole, vanguard party in Algeria, as stipulated by the constitution. The FLN pursues the objectives of the democratic and popular revolution and is building socialism in Algeria.

The General Union of Algerian Workers has some 680,000 members and since its 3rd Congress has pursued a policy of closely working with its base units, broad discussions on existing problems, and consolidation of the state sector of the national economy, which was initiated by the agrarian reform and the socialist management of enterprises.

The National Union of Algerian Farmers (UNPA) associates farmers who work in agricultural producer cooperatives.

The National Union of Algerian Women (UNFA), which has some 150,000 members, includes among its objectives the integration of women in the work process, their cultural and ideological emancipation, and their equality with men in both rights and duties.

Armed forces: The National People's Army has 88,800 men, most of whom are from the rural areas. The police have a force of about 10,000 men. Under the constitutional provisions, "the army serves the people and is under the command of the government," and "it participates in the nation's political, economic and social activities"

There is compulsory military service of twenty-four months.

Culture, education and sports: Before the victory of the revolution, there was only one school of fine arts in Algeria, and only members of the privileged classes had access to it.

In 1962, a National School of Fine Arts was established under a vast programme of general education. This new educational institution had to begin by training teachers who then conveyed their knowledge and skills to the students. Two similar schools were then established, in Constantine and Oran. The National School of Fine Arts in Algiers has some 500 students who spend two years with a general study of the fine arts and then devote themselves to their own specialization for another two years, Admission is based on strict, selective examinations. As regards cinematography, Algeria has ranked first on the African continent since the Carthage Film Festival of 1972. At that event it was noted that Algeria had already passed the stage of apprenticeship and had entered film production on a large scale with outstanding films. The objective pursued by Algerian film-makers is cultural decononization, and they have undoubtedly been successful in this respect. As for music, Algeria has a fine tradition of folk music, which has survived the brutal colonial period.

Official name: The People's Republic of Angola.
Area: 1,246,700 sq.km.
Borders: In the northwest Angola borders on Congo, in the north and northwest on Zaire, in the east on Zambia, in the south on Namibia, and in the west is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: An estimated 6,900,000 inhabitants. The African population belongs in its majority to the Bantu ethnic and linguistic group, represented by numerous tribes, among which the most important are the Ovimbundu, living in the central highlands, the Kimbundu around Luanda, and the Bakongo in the north of the country. The Ovambo tribe lives on both sides of the frontier with Namibia. In the semi-arid areas of Angola live the Koi Koi and San groups, which rank among the oldest inhabitants of the African continent, although in Angola they are not too numerous. The inhabitants of European origin were until the mid-1970s mostly Portuguese, although there were also some Germans growing coffee in the north of the country, and some Afrikaners settled in the southern district of Juila since the end of the 1830s.

Most of Angola's population lives in the central highlands and in the northern half of the coastal region, from Benguela to Luanda. The approximate population density for the country as a whole is 5.4 per sq.km. The annual rate of population growth was 1.54% in the period 1965-1974. After that period, war and large-scale migration have changed the demographic picture.
Capital: Luanda (600,000 inhabitants in 1978).
Principal cities: Huambo, Lobito and Benguela.
Languages: Portuguese, but different Bantu languages are also spoken.
National holiday: November 11, Independence Day.
Geography: Geographically, Angola is typified by a diversity of climatic and topographical features. A coastal plain, ranging in width from 25 km in the south to 200 km in the north, rises to central highlands which cover almost two-thirds of Angola's territory. A crescent-shaped mountain range stretches from the southwest to the northeast of the country, rising to its highest point, 2,620 m, at Mt. Morro Moco. In the north the highlands drop to the Congo basin, while in the east they slope down to the central depression of southern Africa, touching in the south and southeast on the Kalahari Desert.

Due to the country's large size, the cold Benguela current along its coast, and the high relief of the interior, the climate greatly varies. It is equatorial in the north, in Cabinda, tropically humid in the northern half of the central highlands, tropically dry in the high-lying areas of the south, temperate and humid in the northern part of the coastal plain, and semi-arid in the south. In the highlands of the interior the rainy season lasts from November to April and the dry season from May to October. The temperature, which is high in the north, declines in the south, on the coast and in the interior.

Angola has many rivers, some of them quite large. The central high plateau is the watershed and it is there where many of the rivers have their source. They include the Cuanza, the principal, entirely Angolan river, which runs for a length of 1,000 km to empty into the Atlantic Ocean south of Luanda. Other rivers emptying into the ocean include the Loge, the Queve, the N'Gunza, the Catumbela, and the Cunene, which is the longest after the Cuanza and forms the frontier between Angola and Namibia. There are other large rivers, such as the Cuango, which flows to the north, is a tributary of the Congo in Zaire and forms the frontier between Angola and Zaire in the east, the Cuanda and the Cubango in the southeast of the country, and the Zambezi in the east.

Angola's rivers provide the country with an abundance of water for its agriculture and other economic activities, in particular for the production of electric power; although they are not much exploited, 80% of the electricity produced in the country comes from hydroelectric plants.

Brief history: Shortly before 1300 A.D., there existed some 400 km upstream from the mouth of the Congo a native kingdom of the same name, whose political institutions seem to have imitated many of the socio-economic formations situated on the Atlantic coast. Around 1450, the Congo Kingdom was the most powerful political entity in the area. The title of its King, Ngola, was the word which the Portuguese used in a somewhat distorted form for naming the country. They used it referring to the southern coast of the kingdom, although in the same era a second important entity was developing into a rudimentary monarchy in that part of the African continent. However, that monarchy did not emerge fully until about 1500 when Kongolo, the chief of the Luba people, established his sovereignty first over the Katanga region and later along the upper reachrs of the Cassai River in the land of the Luanda ethnic group.

The Portuguese first arrived in 1483 under the command of Diego Cao, who perceived the great opportunities for exploitation offered by the country, and returned home to report to his sovereign. Cao came back to Angola in 1484 and began his work on settling the country. The first Portuguese traders landed six years later near the mouth of the Congo. Their main interest was to barter manufactured goods for slaves.

While slave merchants received to some extent help from some native chiefs, mainly those, converted to Catholicism, who also profited from the slave traffic, they also had to face resistance to the colonization by other native groups.

However, internal conflicts undermined the Congo Kingdom, which was torn by a number of rebellions throughout the 16th century.

In 1576, in spite of native resistance, Paulo Diaz de Novais landed in the Bay of Luanda and settled there permanently by founding a town which eventually became the country's capital.

In the course of the 19th century, the disintegration of the African socio-economic formations culminated under pressure by the Europeans, who had begun the most intensive stage of colonization. Nevertheless, so persistent was the African resistance, that the Portuguese could not fully dominate the country until 1915.

From the end of the 19th century, consciousness of national identity and anti-colonialism grew in strength as two interrelated phenomena each affecting the other. The second half of that century saw the emergence of manifestations which, in the subsequent era, would carry on in the few urban centres of the colony the bitter struggle that the peoples of Angola had waged within the framework of individual tribes or confederation of tribes since before 1576. There also emerged—as expressions of this anti-colonial sentiment—syncretic religious movements which disturbed the colonial order. Simultaneously, the forcibly proletarianized masses also fought for their freedom from exploitation, even though without much organization and in the midst of reformist trends which favoured different forms of dependence and which retained their validity even after the consolidation of Portuguese rule. This reformism was reflected in the programmes of the first political organizations founded in the country between 1910 and the late 1920s.

Mazazines such as *Mensagem* and *Cultura* appeared between 1945 and 1949, where, in spite of the existing censorship, articles could be published that contributed to the formation of political consciousness among the masses.

The first clandestine nationalist party—the Party of the United Struggle of Angolan Africans (PLUA)—was founded in 1953, and three years later, on December 10, 1956, the Movement for the National Independence of Angola (MINA) appeared on the political scene. The two united between 1957 and 1958 to form the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which five years after its birth turned into a mass party

The French colonialists provided education in their own language and mostly to certain selected groups of the population only. Since Algeria's independence, Arabic has predominated as the language of instruction. In general, more than 55% of all school-age children attend classes, but in such large cities as Algiers there is 98% school attendance. There are some 65,000 primary-school teachers, 13,000 teachers at intermediary level schools, and some 5,000 teachers at secondary schools. Algeria's universities still have to employ a certain number of foreign professors.

In the 1976-1977 school term, there were 2,782,000 primary school pupils, 612,000 pupils at the intermediary level, and 53,600 at secondary schools. 34% of the pupils at the intermediary schools are boys, and at the secondary schools 21%.

It is envisaged that in 1985, five million pupils will attend primary and intermediary-level schools, which would represent 90% of all school-age children (6 to 15 years).

Algeria's leading newspapers are *Ach-Chaab*, published in Arabic, and *El-Moudjahid*, which is published in French.

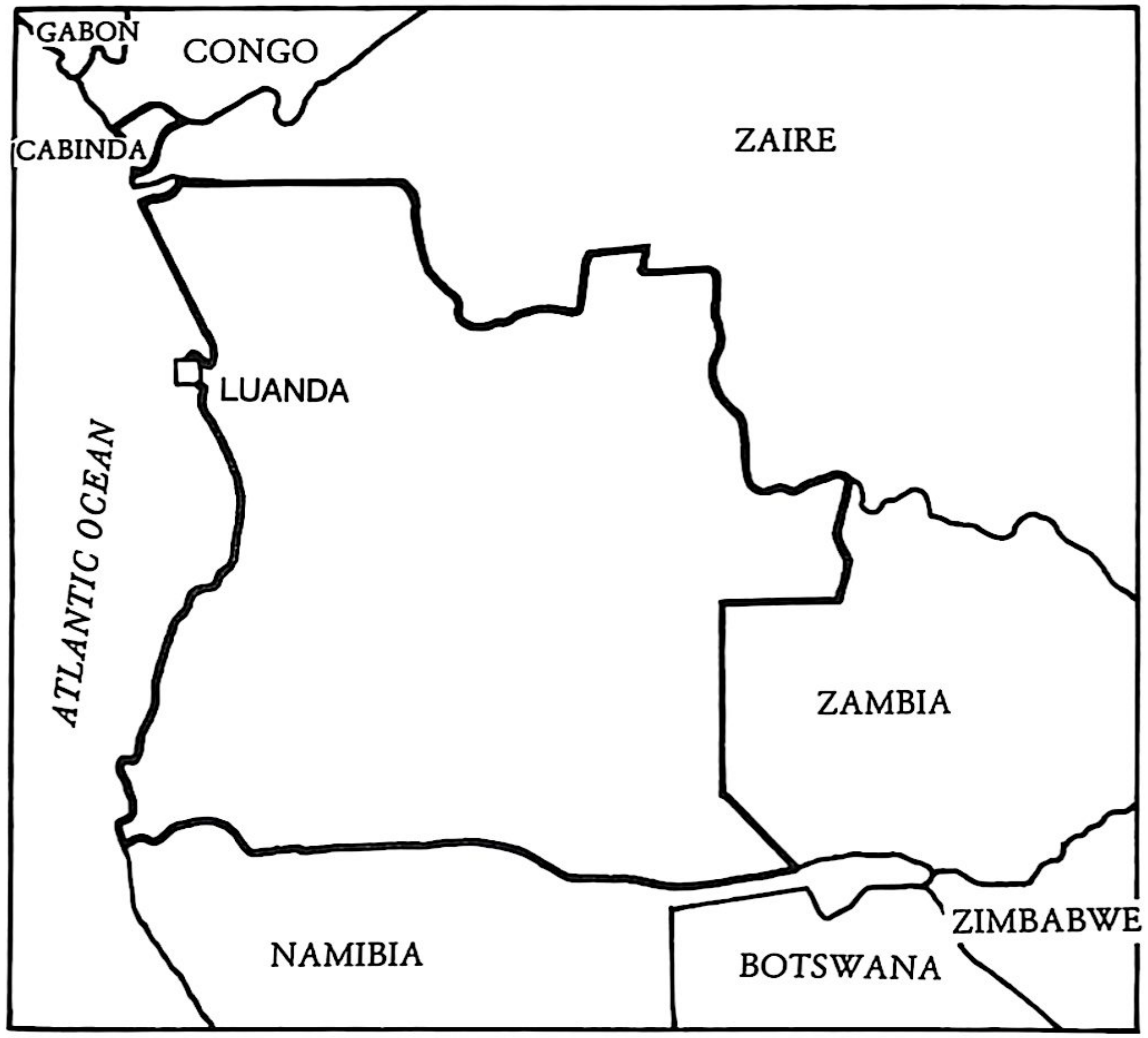
The radio and television network covers the principal urban areas. In 1976, there were four million radio and half a million television receivers in the country.

Football is the most popular sport, followed by track and field events. The government encourages all sports activities.

Public health: Currently, there are some 200 well-equipped hospitals in operation in Algeria with the capacity of about 45,000 beds, more that 2,000 doctors and 6,000 nurses. It is estimated that the country has at least 350 dentists.

Religion: Islam is the state religion and is practised by the majority of the population, although freedom of religion is guaranteed. The Islamic faith was a cohesive factor in the war of liberation against French colonialism.

ANGOLA



whose anti-colonial sentiments were also anti-imperialist in their character.

The political platform of the MPLA raised as its main objectives in that period immediate and complete independence, national unity, African unity, the formation of a republican, democratic and secular government, reconstruction of the economy and development of production on a planned basis, agrarian reform, and a social policy of justice and progress, envisaging protection by the state of the rights of workers, peasants and all the social strata actively championing Angola's cause.

In the four months following its establishment, the MPLA devoted its efforts to organizing the workers' movement and forming within its ranks the bases for the armed independence struggle.

In 1959 and 1960, the colonial police made large-scale arrests and organized a campaign of repression.

In December 1960, the MPLA leadership based abroad issued a final appeal to the masses of people to start a revolution, and on February 4, 1961, the first armed attack was launched by the MPLA forces against Portuguese prisons.

The struggle rapidly spread throughout the country. In the south some sporadic actions were carried out in several towns, although no large-scale fighting took place. It was only after 1966, when guerilla operations and the clandestine struggle could be properly organized and deal effective blows to the enemy.

The growth of revolutionary activity in the north passed through some critical stages due mainly to the emergence of counter-revolutionary groups which tried to obstruct the struggle against colonialism. The most prominent among these groups were the Union of the People of Angola, headed by Holden Roberto, which, when it merged in 1967 with ALIAZO, a group made up of refugees of the Bazombo people, formed the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), and the Front of Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), which during the was in 1975 became notorious because of its ties with the leadership of the People's Republic of China.

In 1964, eclipsed by the political and military growth of the MPLA, Roberto's appeal began to wane, upon which Jonas Savimbi, one of his collaborators, broke away from the FNLA and formed his own organization—UNITA— with the support of the South African regime.

Between 1959 and 1974, foreign interests in Angola, sensing the possibility of a final military victory by the MPLA steadily increased their financial assistance to Savimbi and Roberto.

The progressive military movement which toppled the fascist dicatorship of Marcelo Caetano in Portugal on April 25, 1974, was a factor which improved the conditions under which the MPLA forces had been fighting at the time and, together with the demoralization of the Portuguese troops in the colony, resulted in the acceptance by the Portuguese government of the necessary conditons for establishing a transitional government in Angola for a period of one year.

The People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA) were created on August 1, 1974, on the initiative of a group of 82 column and squadron commanders of the MPLA guerilla forces. This decision of the military commanders was motivated by the necessity to prevent plots to liquidate the MPLA and facilitate the neo-colonialist domination of Angola following the overthrow of the Portuguese fascist dictatorship.

On January 10, 1975, Portugal, the MPLA and the counter-revolutionary FNLA and UNITA movements signed the Alvor Agreements. These documents established the prerequisites for the formation of the transitional government and in this sense, November 11, 1975, was set as the date for the proclamation of independence. The MPLA tactically participated in the negotiations in the endeavour to achieve peace through a political solution.

However, already at the beginning of 1975 the counter-revolutionary FNLA and UNITA began to oppose the line set by the MPLA in the transitional government. These contradications acquired the character of outright confrontation in the middle of the year. Regular Zairean army troops and FNLA forces, instigated by the United States, entered Angolan territory in the autumn—on November 7, 1975—while South African and UNITA forces occupied the Cunene area in August.

In October 1975, after regular tropps from Zaire and South African military forces had penetrated into Angolan territory, the MPLA asked the Cuban government for military instructors to advise the FAPLA.

The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency had devised three plans of subversion under the general code-name Iafeature to prevent the MPLA proclaiming the independence of Angola on November 11,1975.

Shortly after the progressive military coup in Portugal, which toppled the Caetano dictatorship on April 25, 1974, the CIA re-opened its station in Luanda in a move to obstruct the policy of decolonialization, which was beginning to take form in Portugal.

A group of CIA agents, led by John Stockwell, arrived in Luanda with the specific task of preventing an MPLA victory. In order to achieve this objective, the agents studied on the spot the possibilities of its successful accomplishment and the possible methods of doing so. The outcome was the operations code-named "Puff the Magic Dragon", "Iasalacious" and "Iacadence".

According to detailed information supplied by Stockwell himself in his widely circulated book, the first two operations were dropped because they were impracticable. But "Operation Iacadence" was launched, involving the fabrication of materials for use in the press, which were signed by the UNITA and FNLA counter-revolutionary groups and were to be published by the Western news agencies, so that the CIA would not be suspected as the real source of the information concerned. On October 23, instigated by the United States, South African troops, using tanks and artillery, invaded Angolan territory from Namibia and advancing 60 to 70 km daily, penetrated deeply into Angola. On November 3, they were already more than 500 km inside the country and then encountered resistance near Benguela, put up by a recently organized Angolan military school and its Cuban instructors.

On November 5, when South African troops were already operating deep inside Angolan territory, the Cuban government accepting a request by the MPLA, dispatched the first battalion of regular troops to stop the advance of the foreign invaders. Their expulsion and the rout of the counter-revolutionary groups were completed in 1976.

With the country unified, the process began of reconstruction to eliminate the war damage. the first steps towards social changes were taken, and the first economic measures were adopted for the benefit of the Angolan people.

The victory of the Angolan revolution shook the colonial system of Southern Africa, destroyed the myth of the invincibility of the South African army and of mercenary troops, and altered the power structure in Africa.

On May 27, 1977, a coup was staged against the MPLA under the leadership of Jose Jacinto da Silva Vieira Dias (Ze Van Dunem) and Nito Alves. The plan for the coup had been conceived three years earlier. From the tactical viewpoint it envisaged three gradual stages—infiltration of the entire MPLA apparatus and the government machinery, sabotage and discrediting of the existing structures, and seizure of power.

On May 23, the two main leaders of the coup, Alves and Van Dunem, were arrested, but the organization of the coup had already been completed and three dates had been set for its realization.

On the 27th, the putschists attacked the Sao Paulo prison in Luanda in an attempt to free their two arrested leaders, and succeeded in forcing their entry into the national radio building and broadcasting several proclamations against President Neto in the name of what they called an MPLA Action Committee. A few hours later FAPLA troops broke the attempted coup and regained control of the situation.

After the abortive putsch, the MPLA consolidated the situation in the country.

On December 10, 1977, exactly 21 years after the founding of the Movement for the Liberation of Angola, the MPLA held its First Congress. Its most important decisions included the adoption of the name MPLA Labour Party as one of the first steps towards its formation as a vanguard political party. The congress chose Agostinho Neto, the founder of the MPLA and President of Angola, as the President of the MPLA Labour Party, and elected the other 45 members of the party's Central Committee and its 10 substitute members.

In the main report to the congress, President Neto underlined the prospects of creating a people's democratic state in Angola oriented towards socialism and expressed the Angolan people's appreciation of the internationalist assistance granted to them by the Soviet Union, Cuba and other countries.

One of the important resolutions approved by the congress pointed to the conditions for transforming the MPLA into a vanguard party and stated that is members, candidates and sympathizers would be guided by the principles of democratic centralism.

Throughout 1977 and in the first half of 1978, the Republic of South Africa carried out many acts of aggression against the People's Republic of Angola, as well as military, mostly aerial, provocations. At the same time, the South African government encouraged terrorist operations by the counter-revolutionary organization UNITA, led by Jonas Savimbi, which it also aided materially.

One of the most dramatic cases of aggression occurred on May 4, 1978, against Namibian refugee camps at Kassinga in the south of Angola. Under the pretext of hot pursuit of fighters of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), regular South African army troops invaded Angolan territory and at Kassinga killed 600 and seriously wounded 350 refugees, most of them women, children and old people.

The attack on Kassinga preceded by several days attacks by South African troops coming from Namibia against the settlements of Calueque, Chetequera, Cuamato and Dombondola. On both occasions, FAPLA troops rapidly and effectively repelled the aggressors and forced them to withdraw.

In the course of 1979 Angola suffered from numerous instances of aggression and provocation by South Africa carried out with the evident intention to liquidate the revolu-our Republic," as stated by the Angolan ministry of Defence in obvious reference to the help Angola is extending to the people of Namibia.

By the middle of 1980, the attacks had not ceased, even though they differed in their strength, intensity and frequency, often having the form of infiltration by UNITA counter-revolutionary gangs aided by South Africa.

On September 10, 1979, President Agostinho Neto died, but his death did not mean an end to his example and his ideas.

On the 21st of the same month, Jose Eduardo Dos Santos was sworn in as President after his election by the Central Committee of the MPLA Labour Party. In the period since independence, this second Angolan President had carried out besides his great responsibilities in the MPLA also the duties of Foreign Minister, Vice-Premier, and Minister for Economic Development and Planning. The experience he gained in these positions was undoubtedly a major factor in his election to the highest office in the country.

In his inauguration speech, President Dos Santos pledged to the leadership of the Party that he would continue pursuing the foreign and domestic policy lines set and developed by the late President Neto.

In a speech made on the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of the MPLA and the second anniversary of its transformation into the Labour Party, President Dos Santos referred to the threat posed to Angola from outside and to the necessity of keeping vigilance against the internal dangers which any revolution must face. Dos Santos strongly denounced imperialism "which has tried many times to break the unity of the Movement". These features, he underlined, have given the process of national liberation the character of the people's revolution.

In December 1980, the MPLA Labour Party held a special congress at which it reviewed all aspects of the country's activities and which confirmed Jose Eduardo Dos Santos as the key figure in the government and the Party. Other decisions included the constitution of a National Assembly which, once in office, approved the national budget.

At the beginning of 1981, as the new U.S. administration took office, South Africa stepped up its attacks against its African neighbours.

The establishment of closer ties between Washington and Pretoria, announced by Ronald Reagan, forebode new tensions in the south of the African continent.

One of the decisions made by the new President of the United States and announced by him personally in front of television cameras was to provide military assistance to the UNITA counter-revolutionary bands which have their main bases in Namibia, controlled by the Republic of South Africa, their chief supplier of weapons.

The Reagan administration began at the same time to provide ever more overt support to the South African racists and to strengthen its economic, political, as well as military ties with them. This development in the U.S.-South African alliance has also been reflected in stepped-up South African aggressiveness both towards the population of South Africa proper and Namibia, and towards the neighbouring states, primarily the Angolan People's Republic. The South African aggressive operations along the Namibian-Angolan frontier expanded into a new military campaign against Angola, launched on August 23, 1981. On that date the first units of the South African army occupying Namibia and commanded by General Charles Lloyd, crossed the Cunene River and attacked defenceless civilians as deep as 200 km and more inside Angola. At the same time, the racist regime in Pretoria stepped up its campaign of intimidation against the other neighbouring countries, all members of the OAU. Addressing members of the South African parliament, Foreign Minister Botha declared that South Africa's confrontation with its neighbours was unavoidable unless they expeditiously accepted a dialogue with the Republic of South Africa, meaning a surrender to South African terms.

The New South African aggression, which received tacit support from the United States and other NATO countries, met with resolute opposition throughout the world. Angola's case was supported by the overwhelming majority of U.N. members, the OAU, and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. A determined stand was taken by the leaders of the African frontline states, who pointed to the fact that this new campaign by the South African racists was a challenge to all of free Africa.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the maintsays of Angola's economy which, however, relies at present on the exploitation and export of petroleum (8,200,000 tons in 1978). The petroleum industry has been controlled since 1976 by the Sonangol state-owned company which also has control of the foreign petroleum corporations operating in the country.

Farming is carried out on an area of 1,280,000 hectares of the country's total area of 124 million hectares by 64% of the economically active population, which was estimated at 1,839,000 in 1978. According to FAO figures, they produce 450,000 tons of maize, 85,000 tons of millet, 320,000 tons of bananas, 72,000 tons of coffee beans 13,000 tons of cotton fibre and 27,000 tons of cotton seed, 25,000 tons of sisal, 2,000 tons of jute, and 13,000 tons of sunflower seed. In the livestock sector in 1978 there were 3,070,000 head of cattle, 215,000 sheep, 25,000 goats, and 370,000 pigs.

Besides petroleum, the mining industry produced 6,156,000 tons of iron ore in 1974, and 340,000 metric carats of industrial diamonds, Another important sector is the fishing industry which in 1972 reported a catch of 599,100 tons. Light industry produces fishmeal (96,000 tons in 1973), cotton fabrics (23,040,000 m in 1973), cement (699,600 tons in 1975), and 1,229 million kWh of electricity (1974 figure). Petroleum refining capacity currently stands at one million tons, and there are four sugar mills in the country. There are no figures available about Angola's gross national product, balance of trade, foreign exchange reserves, or the cost of living.

The defeat of the South African invaders and of the counter-revolutionary groups and factions signified for Angola the beginning of a battle for economic recovery, since the war had impeded production in many sectors of the economy in addition to having caused the destruction of factories and communication lines. Another negative factor was the exodus of Portuguese businessmen, which caused the closure of factories and businesses due to an absence of skilled personnel. Moreover, Angola was affected by an economic boycott imposed by the United States, mainly with respect to petroleum. Nevertheless, two factors helped the country's economic recovery—the assistance provided by the socialist countries and internal measures adopted by the government, such as a law on state intervention, the formation of a National Bank in 1976, and the institution of a national currency, the kwanza, in 1977.

The nationalization law solved the pressing problem of the paralysis of the production facilities which had been abandoned by their owners; this affected more than 2,000 industrial enterprises in the first year of independence. The formation of the National Bank and the institution of the kwanza made Angola independent of other countries as regards its domestic currency and left the escudo, tied to the Portuguese currency, valueless.

Government: The supreme body of state power is the People's Assembly, which was constituted and whose members were elected under decisions taken in this respect by a special congress of the MPLA Labour Party in December 1980.

Armed forces: The Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (FAPLA), which were founded on August 1, 1974, as the armed branch of the MPLA, were transformed into Angola's regular armed forces after the MPLA government had assumed power.

These forces consist of the navy (MGPA), the air force (FAPADAA), the police (CPPA), and the People's Defence Organization (ODP) which is made up of workers and peasants who voluntarily offer their services to the security of their country.

Organizations: The MPLA Labour Party, which is the leading political body in the country, held its constituent congress in 1977.

The Youth of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (JMPLA) is the country's youth organization dedicated to the upbringing of young Angolans in keeping with the principles of scientific socialism.

Tied to the JMPLA is the Organization of Angolan Pioneers (OPA), which associates Angolan children and raises them in the spirit of revolutionary principles.

The National Union of Angolan Workers (UNTA) is the central trade union organization of the country, which associates all its workers.

The same, as regards women, is true of the Organization of Angolan Women (OMA). Its activity is of great importance for the revolutionary cause.

Culture, education and sports: While under the colonial regime the only permitted cultural expressions were religious rites and events, the MPLA government quickly adopted measures which promoted the cultural development of the population. A decisive step in this respect was the formation of a National Council for Culture. One of the first moves made by this Council was the establishment of People's Houses of Culture, which began to function in industrial, agricultural and fishing centres in the vicinity of Luanda and were subsequently established in other towns as well. These Houses are led by promoters of cultural advancement and are furnished with facilities for attracting the population to their activities .

Another step taken towards the development of revolutionary culture in the country was the founding of the Union of Angolan Writers, which was followed by the formation of the National Union of Artists.

The colonial heritage in the field of education was no less tragic. The illiteracy rate in the cities was 90%, while in the rural areas it was almost 100%. One of the first measures taken by the revolutionary government when it assumed power in 1975 was the launching and successful implementation of a literacy campaign, and the institution of free education compulsory for the first six forms of primary school.

The three fundamental principles guiding Angolan education are nationalization of the educational system, free education at all levels, and education tied to production.

In this field, Angola asked for and received assistance from friendly countries in order to cover the urgent need of teachers and other staff for its first teacher-training schools.

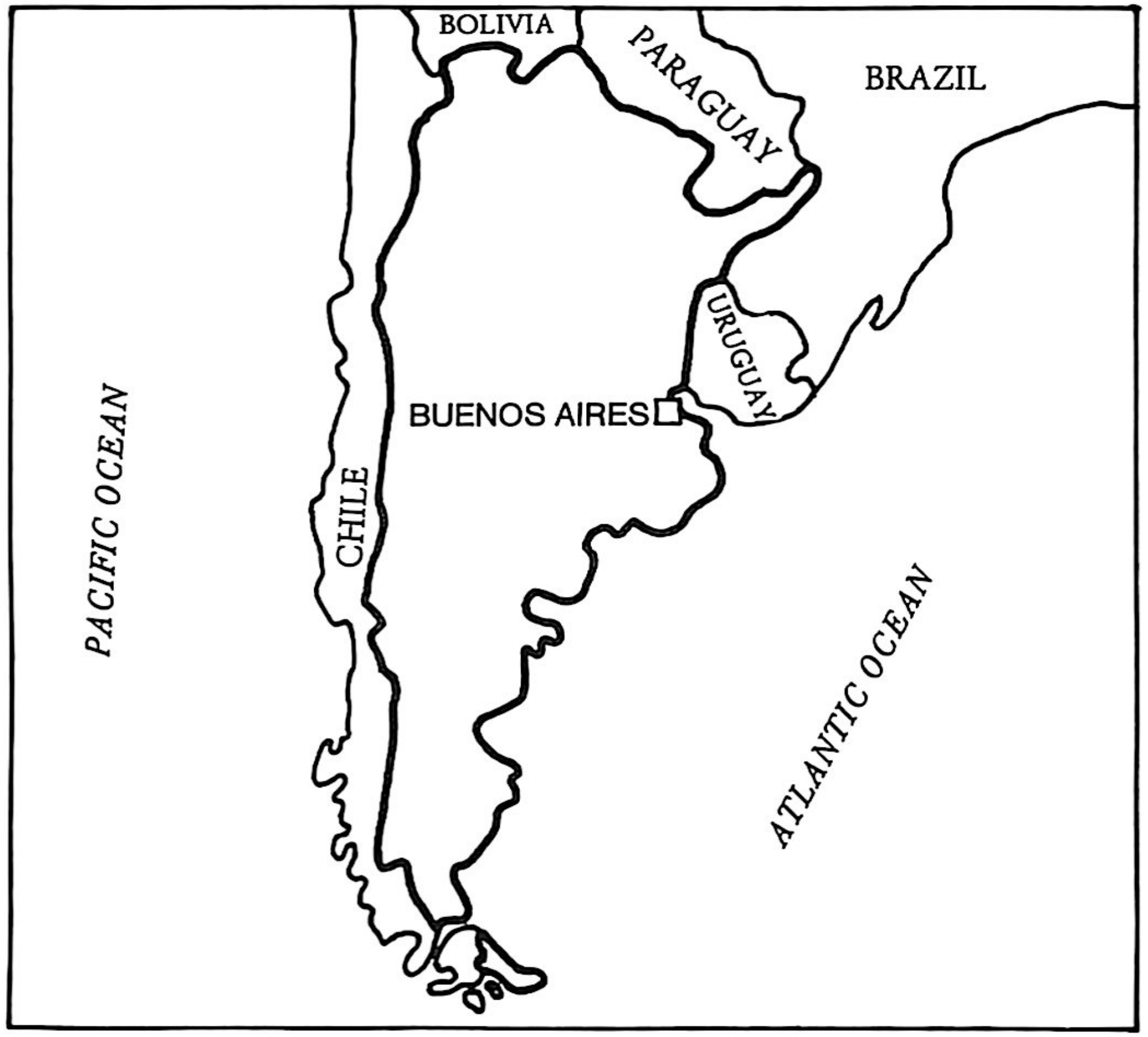
Sport is stimulated by the construction of sports facilities and promotion of sports from childhood on, including their inclusion in school curricula. The national sport is football, but boxing and athletics also enjoy great popularity.

Public health: When the revolutionary government consolidated its authority, only about 70 doctors remained in the country out of the 400 who practised in Angola in the colonial era. In this field, Angola has relied on the effective cooperation of the socialist and other friendly countries, as well as on assistance from progressive European medical organizations, which have provided medical personnel in order to cover the country's most pressing needs and to train its own staff,which would permit Angola to satisfy these needs from its own resources.

One of the first steps taken by the revolutionary government in the area of public health was the institution of preventive medicine. Considerable improvements in sanitary conditions and nutrition, and, primarily, the free provision of medical services produce marked changes in this area.

Religion: The majority of the population professes traditional, native beliefs. Some sectors of the population are Roman Catholics and small groups belong to different Protestant churches.

ARGENTINA


BOLIVIA
PARAGUAY
BRAZIL
URUGUAY
BUENOS AIRES
CHILE
PACIFIC OCEAN
ATLANTIC OCEAN

Official name: The Republic of Argentina.
Area: 2,776,889 sq.km.
Borders: In the north it borders on Bolivia and Paraguay, in the northeast on Brazil, in the east on Uruguay and the South Atlantic, and in the west on Chile.
Population: 27,862,771 inhabitants according to provisional official figures of the 1980 census. The annual rate of population growth in the decade ending in 1980 was 1.7%.
Capital: Buenos Aires (8,925,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Rosario, Cordoba, La Plata and Mendoza.
Languages: Spanish is the official language.
Public holidays: May 25, Day of the First National Government (1810); July 9, Declaration of Independence (1816).
Geography: The Republic of Argentina is situated in the southern-most part of the American continent and has the shape of a triangle whose base is the Tropic of Capricorn and sharpest vertex points towards Antarctica.

Argentina is the second largest Latin American country after Brazil. It is 3,649 km long from its northern frontier to the Tierra del Fuego, the southernmost point of America. Its maximum width is 1,460 km and its minimum width 399 km.

In the north, Argentina has a 742 km long common frontier with Bolivia and a 1,699 km frontier with Paraguay, in the northwest, rivers form its 1,132 km frontier with Brazil, its eastern frontier with Uruguay is 495 km long and is formed by the river of the same name, while in the west the range of the Andes runs for 5,308 km as its frontier with Chile.

In the east, the South Atlantic forms Argentina's 4,725 km long coastline.

Argentina lies in the temperate zone, although all types of climate can be found on its territory—tropical and humid in the northeast, warm and dry in the northwest, temperate in the central plains, the pampas, cold in the high altitudes of the Andes, and windy with gales of a velocity of as much as 200 km per hour in Patagonia.

Argentina's most fertile area is the so-called humid pampas covering the province of Buenos Aires with its 307,000 sq.km and 9,734,000 inhabitants, and parts of the provinces of Santa Fe, Entre Rios and Cordoba.

This is the area of the La Plata watershed, the second most important in South America after that of the Amazon River. Rio de la Plata is actually an estuary whose mouth on the Atlantic Ocean is the widest in the world with its 222 km. The La Plata estuary is formed by the confluence of two great South American waterways, both of which have their sources in Brazil—the Parana River, which with its 3,900 km is the twenty-fifth longest river in the world, and the 1,612 km long Uruguay River.

Emptying into the Parana and the Uruguay are more than thirty rivers which have their sources in Bolivia, Paraguay, Brazil and northern Argentina and which form a watershed which irrigates more than a million square kilometres of the La Plata Basin.

The most important rivers of this watershed, in addition to those already listed, are the Salado del Norte, 2,000 km long, the Iguazu with it spectacular waterfall on the Argentina-Brazil frontier, the 2,500 km long Paraguay, the Bermejo, and the Pilcomayo.

In the region of the Patagonian Cordillera there is a chain of large lakes and extensive forests which cover some two million hectares.

In the South Atlantic, 400 km off the continent, are the Malvinas Islands which have a total area of 11,718 sq.km. They were seized by the British Navy in 1833 and were renamed the Falkland Islands. After repeated claims addressed to the British Crown and to international forums, Argentina was supported in its position as the rightful owner of the islands by the United Nations Decolonization Committee in 1960 and by the U.N. General Assembly itself in 1965.

Argentina also possesses a 965,314 sq.km large sector of Antarctica between 25° and 74° longitude all the way down to the South Pole.

The most important Argentinian ports are those of Buenos Aires, Campana, Rosario, Necochea, Mar del Plata, Bahia Blanca, Viedma, Comodoro Rivadavia, and Ushuaia.

Brief history: The primitive inhabitants of Argentinian territory were nomadic or semi-nomadic peoples in the pampas regions, hunters in the Patagonian highlands, farmers and fishermen in the area of the great rivers. In the northwest, where the long valleys of the Andes formed natural routes to the interior of the Inca realm, lived the Diaguitas upon whom the Incas forced the Quechua language and sun worship.

The Spaniards first reached the territory of today's Argentina 24 years after the discovery of America. In 1516, navigators of the Spanish kingdom of Charles V, who were searching for a passage linking the Atlantic with the Pacific Oceans, discovered the Rio de la Plata estuary, which they named Mar Dulce—the Sweet Sea.

The *conquistadores* made several successive expeditions in quest of gold and silver, but unlike Peru and Mexico, the original inhabitants of this area had not established any well-organized social formation which had accumulated great wealth. On the other hand they were able to devote themselves successfully to large-scale raising of cattle thanks to the easy breeding of the first horses and cows brought from the Old World in 1536.

In less than a century, more than twenty towns were established, including Buenos Aires, Santa Fe, Cordoba, Mendoza, Santiago del Estero, La Rioja and San Juan. At the same time a pastoral, semi-nomadic proletariat emerged as a new social group, the predecessors of today's gauchos.

In the course of time, these communities of Spaniards, Indians and Creoles set up a budding industry, and at the end of the 18th century the colony of Rio de la Plata could be considered a prospering nation. It was then that the Spanish Crown established the Viceroyalty of Rio de la Plata, which was administered from Buenos Aires and had its own customs office.

Spanish centralism imposed on the Vicroyalty a strict customs monopoly which gave rise to smuggling as a flourishing business and at the same time to a rich bourgeoisie in the port cities, which sought freedom of the seas then dominated by the British.

Parallel with the rebellious opposition of the Creole cattle-raisers and merchants, who did not enjoy the same privileges as the Spaniards settled in Buenos Aires, the new generations were imbued with the liberal ideas of the French Revolution. Some young Creoles fought for free trade with political independence in mind.

This revolutionary process was spurred at the beginning of the 19th century when a powerful British military expedition landed and seized Buenos Aires in 1806. The Spanish Viceroy fled, but the people rallied and defeated the invaders.

The political impact of this event was of a decisive character. The defenders of Buenos Aires organized a people's militia and each of its units elected its own leaders. These were the forerunners of the Argentinian army.

In 1807, this militia once again defeated a British military expedition. In 1810, when the news reached Buenos Aires of Napoleon's victory in Spain, the Creoles deposed the Viceroy and set up their first national government, the May Junta, which, however, proclaimed its loyalty to Ferdinand VII.

Such revolutionaries as Jose de San Martin knew that the independence struggle had to be taken as far as Peru as the main Spanish outpost in South America. San Martin, the greatest hero in Argentina's history, thus made an outstanding contribution to the independence of Chile and to the victory over the royalist forces in Peru.

The subsequent years were years of internal struggle for the young nation. The port city of Buenos Aires wanted to preserve its political and economic hegemony inherited from the days of the Viceroyalty. But these centralist pretensions of Buenos Aires were opposed by the powerful leaders of the La Plata interior, such as Jose Artigas in the east, who wanted to establish a confederation "with each of the other Latin American provinces", or Facundo Quiroga, Felipe Varela, Francisco Ramirez, and Estanislao Lopez.

On July 9, 1816, the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata were proclaimed independent at the Tucuman Congresss without the presence of the representatives of those provinces that a year earlier had established a Federal League under Artiga's sponsorship.

The civil struggle reached its climax in 1835, when Juan Manuel de Rosas assumed the highest public office and set up a government which was characterized by its nationalism and which united the other leaders in the interior under its authority. Rosas was overthrown by the military in 1852 and went into exile.

A year later, a constitutional convention adopted a constitution of a liberal type, inspired by the Constitution of the United States, which has remained in effect to this day with only a few modifications. Its authors and perpetuators consolidated the concentration of power in the port city of Buenos Aires, which was controlled by the large landowners and exporters with ties to the British Empire, at the expense of the interior of the country and the weak national industry which was being gradually ruined by the penetration of British capital.

Nevertheless, the civil wars continued until 1880. In that period the Buenos Aires oligarchy waged a campaign of extermination of the indigenous population—mostly in the pampas region—and established Argentina's southern frontier, while at the same time building railways to further its interests and encouraging European immigration in order to settle and colonize the lands seized from the Indians. The immigration wave was so great that at the beginning of this century four out of every five inhabitants of Buenos Aires were newly arrived foreigners. By the time World War I broke out, some 3,500,000 immigrants, most of them Spaniards and Italians, had settled down in Argentina.

This human tide with its diverse ideological beliefs channelled its first aspirations for social change through the Radical Civic Union led by Hipolito Yrigoyen. Radicalism, in confrontation with the conservative oligarchy, ascended to the government after violent campaigns in the elections of 1916.

Two years later, the Communist Party of Argentina was founded. In the same year the Radicals, the Communists and the Socialists promoted the University Reform, a movement which rapidly spread to other Latin American republics.

However, all this time the Argentinian economy remained dependent on British capital and was also hit by the first great capitalist economic crisis of the century. In 1930, Yrigoyen was overthrown during his second term of office and the military broke into Argentina's political life.

General Jose Felix Uriburu, during whose term of office United States capital began to make inroads into Argentinia, was succeeded by a number of conservative governments that came to power through electoral fraud, and this period entered Argentina's history as the "Infamous Decade".

World War II brought new wealth to Argentinian landowners because the country was a major food supplier and its economic development was spurred by the necessity to build a national industry of its own. This, in turn, resulted in a migration of labour from the rural areas to Buenos Aires.

In 1943, under yet another military government, Colonel Juan Domingo Peron entered the political scene. He introduced some social reforms in a climate of growing support by the proletariat which rallied around him and eventually elected him President.

Peron formed his government in 1946 and one of his first steps was the nationalization of the public services and of foreign trade, promotion of light industry and expansion of social services, as well as a strengthening of the trade unions, which acknowledged him as their undisputed leader.

On the other hand, imperialist pressure undermined the government, which did not manage to complete the structual transformation of the national economy that would have broken the economic power of the traditional oligarchy.

In 1952, when Peron was re-elected, he faced a serious economic crisis which produced a drop in the living standards of the great masses of people and rising inflation. In this period, too, United States capital completed the process of forcing out British interests and of dictating its own political conditions.

The first stage of Peronism came to its end in September 1955, when an alliance of military, political and clerical forces overthrew the Peron government and assumed the name "Liberating Revolution". Peron was forced into exile, but General Eduardo Leonardi who succeeeded him in office, stayed there barely two months. He was replaced by still another general, Pedro Eugenio Aramburu, who proceeded to dismantle the trade-union organization, banned Peronism and persecuted the popular movement as a whole.

In 1958, the radical Arturo Frondizi won the political support of the Peronists and Communists, and won the elections which put an end to the de facto regime in Argentina. However, the Frondizi government abandoned the anti-imperialist platform which its leader had promised to the people before the elections, and concluded burdensome agreements with a number of U.S. oil corporations. At the same time he turned against and persecuted his former allies.

The country was swept by large-scale workers' strikes, which were accompanied by street clashes, assassinations and sabotage, and included attempts by militant Peronists to engage in guerilla warfare. In the meantime, Frondizi was under constant pressure by the military high command, which was increasingly intervening in political decision-making.

In March 1962 when Argentina was in the midst of an almost unprecedented economic recession, the military overthrew Frondizi and the government was formally taken over by Jose Maria Guido. However, the economic crisis was growing, unemployment was rising and a number of McCarthyite measures were put into effect. The military itself was rent by internal conflicts as a result of the political instability, and eventually General Juan Carlos Ongania gained decisive power.

In July 1963, elections were held once again and, with Peronism and the leftist parties banned, the voters elected the radical candidate, Arturo Illia. In the course of his first few months in office, Illia succeeded in achieving some economic recovery and also restored some civil liberties. However, his cancellation of the petroleum contracts signed by Frondizi and his policy of moderate nationalism produced some friction with the United States.

Because of this friction, the government switched to an orientation which was more to the liking of U.S. interests, including the necessary vote for making the Organization of American States—the OAS—endorse the invasion of the Dominican Republic by U.S. Marines and their intervention against the constitutionalist movement in that country.

In the early months of 1964, the police uncovered preparations for armed struggle made by a group of young people in the People's Guerilla Army, headed by Jorge Ricardo Masetti, and eventually destroyed the organization.

Illia, whose own party did not fully support him and which was in the minority in the Argentinian Congress, was opposed by the workers' movement. His government began to falter until the military once again returned to power in June 1966 under General Ongania.

This time the armed forces announced their intention to govern for two decades and to modernize the inefficient government apparatus and production.

What the military called the "Argentine Revolution" under Ongania's leadership annulled the Constitution, disbanded the political parties, closed the Congress and imprisoned its opponents among the workers and students. The running of the economy was entrusted to officials of the big multinational corporations, who encouraged the banks and industry to assume a dominant role for the benefit of U.S. investors. Wages were frozen and the currency was drastically devalued in order to promote these objectives.

From 1969 on, the people's resistance began to manifest itself in many ways. Cordoba and Rosario, two of Argentina's principal cities, became true battlefields where the masses of working people took to the streets and seized the main buildings in protest demonstrations;

In this period, the urban guerilla movement emerged in an organized and public way. The Montoneros, the People's Revolutionary Army, the Revolutionary Armed Forces and other guerilla organizations took over entire villages, attacked military barracks and police stations, urged workers in factories to rise, and carried out other, similar actions to mobilize the people together with the political parties of the left.

Confronted with this growing political opposition, the military regime suspended all civil liberties by proclaiming a state of emergency and in June 1970, after the abduction and assassination of General Aramburu, which had been carried out by the Montoneros, instituted the death penalty for guerilla activity.

Strikes by workers and armed operations provoked the first crisis in the top governing echelon. The Commanders' Junta recalled Ongania and replaced him by General Roberto Marcelo Levingston,who was at that time in Washington as Argentina's representative in the Inter-American Defence Council.

At that time, too, some political leaders agreed to coordinate their campaign in a project called "The People's Hour", while for its part the government announced a plan of constitutional reform aimed at normalizing the institutions of government. Nevertheless, the political upheaval and the guerilla struggle continued until they produced another change of President.

Once in power, Lieut.Gen. Alejandro Lanusse lifted the ban on political parties and put into effect statutes for them which, however, being full of contradictions, were objected to on many grounds by the democratic groups.

The government tried to introduce new conciliatory measures. Thus, the remains of Eva Peron, who had been the spiritual leader of the justicialist movement and who had died in 1952, were returned to her husband, Juan D. Peron, and the indictment against him was dropped. From his exile in Spain, Peron instructed his supporters and established contacts with his old political adversaries.

The opposition forces then reached a new agreement on greater representation by establishing a Civic Front of National Liberation, in which the Peronists, the Radicals, the Communists and representatives of other political parties took part.

On August 22, 1972, the People's Revolutionary Army, the Montoneros and the Revolutionary Armed Forces carried out a joint operation to free six of their leaders imprisoned in the Trelew prison in the south of the country. They escaped to Chile and were then granted asylum in Cuba, but sixteen of their companions were shot by navy riflemen.

Unemployment, inflation and other economic problems kept latent workers' discontent, while the regime was unable to liquidate the guerilla movement. Finally, the door opened for the people to issue their verdict when elections were called.

Peron returned briefly to Argentina in the last quarter of 1972, and before returning to Madrid, pieced together an alliance which was to win the forthcoming elections—the Justicialist Front of Liberation. Its candidates for the presidency and vice-presidency, Hector Campora and Vicente Solano Lima, won 50% of the votes cast.

The newly elected government assumed power on May 25, 1973, on the national and provincial levels, as well as in the legislature. Only a few hours later, the Congress unanimously passed a law granting an amnesty for all political prisonsers.

Argentina restored diplomatic and commercial relations with Cuba, which had been broken off twelve years before.

Representatives of the trade unions and of business concluded a social contract with the new government, which governed worker-employer relations for two years with the executive authority acting as mediator.

The final return of Peron to his country in June 1973, was marred by the assassination of more than 100 of his supporters who were machine-gunned on the roads leading to the Ezeiza International Airport. Within the Peronist movement, the orthodox line was opposed by the "Revolutionary Tendency" faction which had been on the rise in its youth sector and the guerilla organizations in the previous few years.

Before he had completed the first two months in office, Campora resigned so that Peron himself could assume the presidency. The provisional government, which was headed by Raul Rastiri, called new presidential elections, and Peron was elected by 62% of the vote.

Peron encouraged political dialogue with the opposition parties and drew support from the agreement between the trade unions and employers in his attempt to deal with the many chronic ills affecting the country. However, he could not accomplish his goal of pacification and national reconstruction.

Peron died at the age of 78 on July 1, 1974, and was succeeded by his widow, Maria Estela Martinez, who was Vice-President. Under her rule, the most extreme rightist trends in the Justicialist movement came to the fore and a few months after her assumption of power a state of emergency was proclaimed throughout the country for an indefinite period.

The principal measures adopted in that period included the Employment Contract Act which introduced radical changes in social legislation. Nevertheless, Argentina's political and economic situation continued to be plagued by many problems.

An especially critical moment occurred in the middle of 1975, when faced by a rising cost of living, which had risen 300% in that year alone, the masses of workers launched a forceful movement for higher wages. As a result of this crisis, a number of ministers and secretaries of state submitted their resignations.

As so often in the past, the army was again given the task of fighting the guerilla movement with the support of the navy, the air force and the police.

Under the government of Peron's widow, the extreme rightist Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA) expanded. Its establishment is attributed to the Minister of Social Welfare, Jose Lopez Rega, and it carried out hundreds of abductions and murders of progressive and leftist personalities in a wave of indiscriminate repression which even affected individuals without any political allegiance and entire families, as well as Chilean, Uruguayan and other exiles.

On March 24, 1976, the armed forces once again broke on to the national political scene, when they overthrew President Maria Estela Martinez and launched what they called a "process of national reconstruction".

The military government chose as its primary task suppression of the guerillas, while maintaining the state of emergency and all the other emergency measures. One of its first steps was the dissolution of the Congress, a ban placed on political party activities, action against the workers' federation and many of the major trade unions, the outlawing of a number of political, social and cultural groups, mainly those of the left, prohibition of strikes, and imposition of severe punishments for actions considered as collaboration with the guerillas.

In the economic area, a plan proposed by the International Monetary Fund was adopted, which led to a reduction of the purchasing power of the population by 50% in the course of the first year of its implementation. At the same time, some of the foreign property which had been nationalized was restored to the original owners and a policy of encouragement of foreign investments was launched together with the abolition of government control over foreign exchange.

As abductions and killings by paramilitary gangs continued, official reports began to grow about armed clashes with the guerillas, in which the casualties (generally those killed) were almost exclusively on the guerilla side.

In the midst of this situation, President Jorge Videla announced at the beginning of 1977. that the government had decided to open a dialogue with representative civilian institutions on the country's future, but made it clear that this move did not include the political parties and that no elections were envisaged in the near future.

Already before the military coup of March 24, 1976, repression had been launched against the guerilla movement and against the progressive forces in general. This repression led to more than 12,000 individuals being reported missing, to thousands of people killed or imprisoned without any charge or trial, in addition to countless people who went into exile.

Under this situation, Lieut.-Gen. Roberto Viola was designated to assume the presidency as of March 29, 1981, in place of Lieut-Gen. Jorge Videla. Viola has been Videla's close collaborator since before the 1976 coup and is the military's latest choice for perpetuating its power.

Summing up, it may thus be said that the year 1981 began in Argentina with a military regime which is obviously wasting away in the midst of a deep economic and social crisis that can be solved only by measures which would change the course of the country's destiny.

Economy: Argentina has a mixed, agricultural and industrial economy which is dependent on farming products as a source of foreign-exhange earnings. Its manufacturing industry supplies a considerable portion of goods for domestic consumption, although the production costs are relatively high. Thus, its products run into problems competing on the world market.

A high inflation rate, loss of real purchasing power and declining domestic demand have characterized Argentina's economy in recent years, especially from 1975 on, which has brought it into a state of stagnation and recession. Even in 1977, when the gross national product rallied compared with the previous year, in the last quarter of that year stocks began to accumulate and the business community referred to this development as a case of obvious recession.

According to a study made by the Economic Commission for Latin America, Argentina's GNP in 1976 rose to 33,547,000,000 dollars. Official figures issued by the Central Bank with respect to the first nine months of 1977 showed an increase of 4.53% compared with the same period in 1976, which was the first positive development after two years of negative trends. The average annual rate of growth of the GNP in the period 1965-1974 was 4.1% but in 1975 there was a drop of 1.4% and in 1976 another drop of 2.9%.

15% of the economically active population are employed in agriculture. The total area under cultivation is 344,200 sq.km, that is 12.4% of the country's territory. Wheat, grown on 53,400 sq. km, and maize, produced on 30,700 sq. km, are the major crops. The 1976-1977 harvest yielded 11,000,000 tons of wheat, 8,300,000 tons of maize, and 6,600,000 tons of sorghum, which were all greater quantities than in past years because of an awakened interest of the growers due to attractive prices on the international grain market. Nevertheless, a report issued by the National Grain Council indicated that the output of wheat in the 1977-1978 season was 53% less than in 1976 because of a reduction in the area sown.

Argentina also produces flax, rice, sunflower seed, barley, sugar cane, potatoes, citrus fruit, cotton, tobacco and a great variety of fruit.

Livestock numbers have grown in recent years partly due to reduced slaughter resulting from limitations placed on meat imports by the European Economic Community. On September 30, 1976, statistics showed the existence of 60,500,000 head of cattle, 36,500,000 sheep, 5,268,000 goats and 5,100,000 pigs.

Timber production dropped in the previous decade and today stands at some 4,000,000 tons a year.

Apart from petroleum and natural gas, mining is not greatly developed although Argentina has large mineral deposits. Uranium, potassium, silver, manganese, sulphur, lead, zinc, tin and iron ore are produced, but in modest quantities.

Petroleum production amounted to 25,005,400 cu.m in 1977 compared with 23,147,500 the year before. The output of natural gas was 8,608,600,000 cu. m in 1977, which was 4.6% more than in 1976. Production of coal was 533,300 tons in 1977, a drop compared with the 614,500 tons produced in 1976. Electricity output in 1977 reached 27,328,000,000 kW.

In recent years, industrial production has stagnated or declined and in 1977 some of its branches were clearly in recession. While in the period 1950-1961, the existing production capacity was exploited at 90% on the average, its utilization had dropped to 81.2% in 1976 and 1977. In some industries, such as engineering, transport equipment, cardboard and paper, the existing production capacities operated as low as at 70%. According to business sources, in January 1978, the steel industry had in stock the equivalent of three months production, as sales had dropped by 27.7% Sales of motor cars were down 25% and those of textile products as much as 50%.

1,320,000 tons of cast iron were produced in 1976, as well as 2,412,000 tons of crude steel and 180,120 vehicles, including 141,600 passenger cars and 23,923 commercial vehicles and tractors.

The industrial sector scored a record number of bankruptcies in 1977, which represented the overall equivalent of 65,700,000 million dollars.

Argentina's 1976 balance of payments showed a surplus of 611,000,000 dollars. According to official figures, the balance of trade also showed a surplus of 882,500,000 dollars; due to a cut in imports, which in that year amounted to 3,032,500,000 dollars, while exports were valued at 3,915,000,000 dollars. That year the major sales included 10,100,000 tons of cereals, specifically 3,100,000 tons of maize, 3,400,000 tons of sorghum and 3,000,000 tons of wheat, as well as 453,787 tons of meat and meat products to the value of 504,800,000 dollars, 16,928,000 crates of fruit, 21,700,000 hectolitres of wine, and 93,310 tons of minerals—mainly sodium borate and calcium—worth 16,600,000 dollars.

Other figures available for 1977 show that in the first nine months of that year the balance of payments indicated a surplus of 1,360,000,000 dollars, while the balance of trade was also positive to the tune of 1,492,000,000 dollars. Grain exports in 1977 amounted to 18,452,480 tons, including 5,500,000 tons of maize and 5,260,000 tons of wheat. Meat sales from January to September 1977 totalled 357,421 tons valued at 432,500,000 dollars. An official report underlined that trade with the European socialist states amounted in 1977 to 390,000,000 dollars, which was 30% more than the previous year and which documents Argentina's expansion to other markets in recent years. To this should also be added an increase in trade with Cuba. Generally speaking, agricultural products accounted for 60% of Argentina's exports in 1977, while the non-traditional items—motor cars, computing equipment, books, etc.—increased their share of the list of exports to 25% of the total.

On the import side, there has been a gradual decrease in the share of consumer goods parallel with growing purchases of raw materials, semi-finished products and capital goods.

The budgetary deficit—a chronic ailment of Argentina's finances—has grown several times in recent years. In 1976 it amounted to 367,232,000,000 pesos. An official report on budgetary outlays in 1977 showed that the deficit in that year amounted to 587,768,000,000 pesos, due to fiscal outlays of 2,452,627,000,000 pesos and a budgetary income of 1,864,859,000,000 pesos. At the January rate, the deficit would equal 948,012,000 dollars.

A high inflation rate is steadily eroding the purchasing power of the people although wages are strictly controlled and are periodically adjusted. On October 1, 1977, the minimum wage was fixed at between 22,500 and 30,000 pesos, that is approximately 37 and 50 dollars

At the end of 1976, Argentina's external debt amounted to 9,738,000,000 dollars according to a Central Bank report which categorized this sum into 6,648,000,000 dollars of public debt and 3,090,000,000 dollars of private debts. According to the same report, the servicing of this debt in amortization and interest payments amounted to 3,206,000,000 dollars in 1977.

The Central Bank of the Argentine Republic regulates the activities of 130 banks with more than 2,200 branches located all over the country. The official banks hold 50% of the total sum of bank deposits, while the private Argentinian banks held 30% of the remaining 20% held by foreign-owned banks.

In 1973, the National Investments Register listed 1,039 foreign enterprises with a declared capital of 1,909,872,234 dollars.

Between 1966 and 1973 remittances abroad in the form of profits, dividends, royalties and commissions amounted to 1,335,500,000 dollars, according to a report by the Central Bank. With interest and other payments included, the outflow of capital in that period amounted to 3,159,700,000 dollars.

At the same time, the influx of foreign capital through direct investments in those eight years amounted to 76,600,000 dollars, which means that Argentina suffered from a drain of convertible currency equalling 3000,000,000 dollars.

The home countries of the foreign companies established in Argentina include in the order of the importance of their investments: United States, Switzerland, the Netherlands, West Germany, Great Britain, Italy, and France.

Foreign capital is established particularly in the manufacture of transport means and equipment, engineering, industrial and other chemicals, electrical equipment and components, commerce and, first and foremost, extraction of petroleum and natural gas.

Between January and September 1980, Argentina's balance of payments showed a deficit of 6,100,000,000 dollars, which was covered by foreign loans and from foreign-exchange reserves.

External debt, which had grown to 10,796,000,000 dollars at the end of 1978 and to 19,034,000,000 dollars in 1979, took a big jump up to 22,315,000,000 dollars in June 1980 and continues rising. It is estimated that at the beginning of 1982 it will exceed 30,000,000,000 dollars.

In the first ten months of 1980, the budgetary deficit rose to about 3,460,000,000 dollars, which represents a 77.6% increase in comparison with the same period in 1979.

According to estimates, the adjusted deficit for 1980 will reach 4,495,000,000 dollars, although if the state debt represented by government bonds and other such papers is included, the deficit would amount to 5,255,000,000 dollars.

In the third quarter of 1980, there was zero growth of the GNP, accompanied by a 5% drop in gross industrial output, and it was estimated that when all the figures for 1980 are added up, the GNP growth rate may range from zero to a drop of 1.5%.

The steady increase in the number of commercial bankruptcies offers a graphic picture of Argentina's economic situation. In 1976 they represented 700,000 dollars, but by 1977 this amount had risen to 5,370,000 in 1978 it stood at 81,300,000, and in 1979 steeply climbed to 556,300,000 dollars. But even this amount was surpassed in 1980 when by the end of November it reached no less than 609,721,000, dollars. However, some economists assert that this figure for 1980 is not quite true because there is a number of large enterprises which have debts that are virtually unpayable and whose total ranges from 8,000 to 12,000 million dollars. Their collapse and bankruptcy have been held up by different means because their fall would bring down almost the entire financial system of the country.

There are some other facts which may add up to the picture of Argentina's economic reality.

The forgeign-exchange rate of the Argentine peso has been steadily declining from 5 per U.S. dollar in the period 1971-1974 to 274 in 1976, 597 in 1977, 1,003 in 1978, 1,618 in 1979, 2,000 in 1980, and 2,200 in February 1981.

Then there is the steady rise in the cost of living since 1970, which has gone up at the following pace: 21.7% in 1970, 38.1% in 1971, 64.1% in 1972, 43.8% in 1973, 40.1% in 1974, 335% in 1975, 347.5% in 1976 (the highest rate in Latin America and in the world since World War II), 160.4% in 1977, 169.8% in 1978, 168.8% in 1979, and 87.6% in 1980.

In the course of the five years that have passed since the armed forces had launched their economic policy in March 1976, the lack of development has been accentuated by an obvious economic retrogression.

In 1960, Argentina accounted for 25.1% of Latin America's gross industrial output, that is one quarter of the sum total produced by all the countries of the region. In 1970, according to figures published by the Inter-American Development Bank, this share dropped to 22.2% and in 1979 to 16.4%. It is estimated that in 1980, in view of the pace of economic recession, it had gone still lower.

Unemployment varied from 4 to 5% in 1976.

As regards the percentage of industrial workers in the total labour force employed, it was 75% in 1974, but dropped to 71% in 1978. As for the latter figure, it should be noted that in the period 1979-1980, the number of industrial workers laid off exceeded the 350,000 who had been made redundant between 1974 and 1978.

At the end of 1980, Argentine industry had 50% of its capacity standing idle. The steel industry was one of the most seriously affected and reported that year a 22.2% drop in the output of cold-rolled products, a 14.2% drop in the output of hot-rolled products, a 16.5% reduction in the output of crude steel, and a 6.8% drop in the production of pig iron. In October 1980, the steel industry was 1,000,000,000 dollars in debt and had laid off 12,000 workers.

The metallurgical industry in general reported a 20% decline in production in 1980 and a similar reduction in its labour force.

The situation in the textile industry is well illustrated by the fact that the 120,000 workers it employed in 1976, 40,000 had been laid off by the beginning of 1980.

The meat-packing industry ended 1980 with a 34.9% drop in exports and with 30,000 workers less, who had been made redundant in the period 1979-1980 due to the closing down of eighteen freezing plants and reduced production in others.

Well-known economists in Argentina and other countries blame this crisis on the official economic policy, which, it is asserted, is being governed by a new international division of labour inspired by the Trilateral Commission—a body formed by the transnational corporations of the United States, Western Europe and Japan—and assigning to Argentina the role of exporter of agricultural products to the detriment of its industry.

Some measures put into effect have brought about a grave crisis in large sectors of the country's agriculture as well as in its financial sector, and this has produced a general economic recession.

In December 1978, specific anti-inflationary rules were put into effect in order to counter an inflationary rate which averaged 224% annually between 1975 and 1978. In spite of these "rules", the inflation rate was 140% in 1979, a fact which led to a decision to expand and accelerate the application of the "rules" in the attempt to bring inflation down to about 90% by the end of 1980.

Two means were employed for attaining this dubious objective—an accelerated reduction of tariffs on imported goods and maintenance of an artificial rate of exchange with a growing accentuation of the exchange disparity.

The tariff reductions brought the 54.7% of duty paid on the average for imported goods until October 1976 down to a mere 20.3% in June 1980.

It is estimated that between the end of 1978 and the end of 1980, the Argentine peso was artificially revalued by 50%.

The tariff reduction means that imported products, many of them benefiting from dumping practices in the countries of their origin, are being subsidized by the Argentine government through the reduced import tariffs and through an exchange rate which favours them by a cheap dollar.

In contrast, domestic producers are facing high internal production costs which prevent them from competing with the foreign imports at a time when their export capacity is being increasingly undercut because for every dollar they get 50% less real value than they should receive in pesos.

The current economic recession in Argentina may be viewed as the most extended in this century.

If the present scheme is further pursued, it may still further aggravate the situation because any move to alleviate the recession would increase the deficit and inflation, and, on the other hand, any attempt to contain inflation and the deficit would aggravate the recession and the crisis of the financial system and of foreign trade.

This was the economic situation at the beginning of 1981. To persist in not devaluing the peso and maintaining an artificial rate of exchange would mean that exports would continue falling and imports growing, while at the same time the economic recession would deepen, the balance of trade and payments deficit would continue growing, and the country's foreign exchange reserves would be exhausted.

There are economists who assert that if the peso is devalued, an inflationary explosion would take place, foreign financing would come to an end and Argentina's foreign exchange reserves would be similarly almost exhausted, which would be followed by a massive flight of foreign capital, which had been attracted by a favourable exchange rate and interest rates considered to be the highest in the world.

At the beginning of 1981, ten prominent Argentinian economists agreed in their analysis on the gravity of their country's economic and financial crisis and on the impossibility of solving it without a profound change of orientation. These economists are members of different schools of economic thought and therefore analyzed the situation in their country and the possibilities of solving if from different viewpoints. They agreed, however, that unless he was blind, nobody in the country would be bold enough to deny the seriousness of the economic crisis and, in particular, of the crisis of the measures being applied.

As already noted, if no change takes place, any move to check inflation will spur the recession and any move to revive the economy will aggravate inflation.

It is obvious that with an economy which in 1981 produces less than five years ago, with a state of chronic budgetary deficit, which made it necessary to issue seven billion pesos, i.e., more than 3,500,000,000 dollars with a private sector burdened by indebtedness, with a rate of foreign exchange which stifles production and bloats the balance of trade and payments deficit, with frail foreign exchange reserves, and with a foreign debt three times as large as in the crisis of 1976, the prospects for 1981 could not be encouraging.

There were no official or private data for 1981 as to the extent to which Argentinian capital was being channelled in other directions, since it is being ever less invested in productive ventures and—apart from the bankruptcy cases—has been diverted to other branches of the national economy. It was easy to observe trends showing that priority was being given to investing the capital abandoning the industrial sector in import business, financial speculation and in values and enterprises in other countries, mainly Brazil and the United States.

On January 25, 1981, the Buenos Aires daily *Clarin*, when analyzing th economic developments of 1980 and of the period 1976-1980, wrote that "anybody who would want to destroy the national enterprise could hardly find a more effective means of doing so than that offered by the combination of tariff, foreign-exchange, credit and fiscal measures being applied today". *Clarin* pointed out that the symptoms "are unequivocal and indicate that the economic crisis is entering its most horrendous stage".

The economic prospects for the five-year period which began in 1981 depend on how the crucial problems dominating that year are confronted—the management of the business, financial and foreign-exchange crisis and the choice the Viola government makes as to its economic policy, in particular its strategy to combat inflation.

Besides being a member of the United Nations and the Organization of American States, Argentina is a contracting party to the General Agreement of Tariffs and Trade —GATT—and a member of the International Monetary Fund and of the Inter-American Development Bank.

It participates in conferences of the Foreign Ministers of the La Plata Basin and is a member of the Latin American Energy Organization, the Latin American Economic System and, since 1973, of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Government: The Argentine constitution provides for a republican, representative and federal system of government with the classical division of legislative, executive and judicial powers.

Since the military coup of March 24, 1976, the supreme organ of power has been a military Junta, whose members are the commanders-in-chief of the army, air force and navy, and which appoints the President, who exercises executive power.

The legislative duties are being carried out by an advisory military commission which is subordinated to the Junta, while judicial power is exercised by courts-martial, which try all cases related to the insurrection.

Argentina is administratively divided into 22 provinces, one national territory, in addition to the federal capital, the Argentinian Antarctica and the South Atlantic islands, whose authorities are appointed by the Junta.

Armed forces: The armed forces consist of the army, the navy and the air force.

The army has four corps with headquarters in Buenos Aires, Rosario, Cordoba and Bahia Blanca, in addition to ten brigades. The total strength of the army is more than 100,000 men led by a corps of professional officers. There is universal military service with the draft applying to all men at the age of twenty.

The navy has its supreme command located in Buenos Aires and operates from bases situated along the Argentinian coast. Its fleet includes an aircraft carrier with a displacement of 20,000 tons, a 10,000-ton cruiser, eight destroyers, two frigates, four submarines, and a number of torpedo boats.

The air force maintains two large bases at Cordoba and Mendoza, and is equipped with jet fighter-bombers and missiles. Its aircraft include different types produced in Argentina.

A National Guard, attached to the army, is charged with guarding the land frontiers, while a Coast Guard, attached to the navy, fulfils the same duty along the country's coast and river frontiers.

The police force includes a federal police with jurisdiction in the capital and provincial police forces. They are equipped with armoured assault vehicles.

Organizations: Since 1945, Peronism has been Argentina's major electoral force, although since the military coup of March 1976 it has been in recession like other political parties. Moreover, because of Peron's death and the subsequent overthrow of his widow, it has been left virtually without a leader, since there is no personality capable of welding together its different factions.

Peronism had been banned for 15 years, but in the 1973 election it regained its legitimacy and its candidates won most of the elective offices. Its political platform is based on social justice, although it reflects a broad ideological spectrum.

The most radical and progressive factions of Peronism were associated in organizations outlawed by the military government in March 1976, and in the Montoneros guerillas. Representatives of these factions announced at the beginning of 1977 the formation of a Peronista Montonero Movement with a political platform aspiring at rallying around it a majority of those who support Peronism.

The Radical Civic Union, the second most powerful electoral force in the country, draws its support mainly from the middle class and favours moderate changes. In the course of its long history it has experienced a number of splits, including those which led to the founding of the Intransigent Party and the Movement for Integration and Development. At present it also includes a group known as Renovation and Change.

The Argentine Communist Party was founded in 1918. Through most of its existence it has had to operate underground because of constant persecution by different governments. In 1973 it began to work in public, but since the coup of 1976, it has been subjected to the same suspension of activities as applied to all other political parties.

The programme of the Communist Party points to the necessity of establishing a social system based on collective ownership of the means of production. Therefore, it is striving for the formation of a broad national democratic front with an anti-oligarchy and anti-imperialist tenor, which, under the leadership of the working class, would sustain a new type of people's government.

On the Argentine left there are also the Christian Revolutionary, the Intransigent and Socialist Workers' Parties, in addition to various outlawed parties and organizations.

The most conservative political groups during the 1973 elections were associated in the Federalist Popular Alliance, which won 15% of the vote. These groups call for a military "strong hand" type of government.

The General Confederation of Labour (CGT), founded in 1930, is the only central organization of the Argentine workers' movement and has two million affiliated members, who belong to 145 unions. Since 1976 it has been kept under supervison, just as have a number of individual trade unions.

In the 1940s, with the advent of the Peronist movement, the CGT was re-organized and since then its history has been closely linked with that movement. For this purpose, "62 Organizations" were constituted as an institution operating as the trade union branch of Peronism. In 1975 the CGT joined the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), whereby it strengthened its ties with United States and West European trade unions.

The Inter-Syndical Movement, which is of Marxist orientation, the CGT in the Resistance, which was formed by the Montoneros, and the so-called "militant guilds" are the most conscious and radical entities of the working class.

Among the Argentinian peasantry, reform movements have been organized in the struggle against the power of the big landowners by the Union of Agricultural Producers and the Agrarian Leagues.

The big landowners have formed traditionally a highly homogenous social group with great influence in Argentina's economic and political life. The National Agrarian Census of 1969 showed that there were 3,044 estates of more than 10,000 hectares each and covering one-third of all agricultural land in use. The main organizations of the landowners are the Argentine Rural Society and the Confederation of Rural Associations of Buenos Aires and La Pampa, both of which strongly opposed an agrarian reform bill proposed in 1974 and finally abandoned by the government.

The General Economic Confederation, disbanded by the military government in 1977, was an association of mostly small and middle businessmen active in industry and trade. Founded in 1952, it reached the peak of its importance in 1973 and 1974, when it represented the private business sector in the Social Contract concluded with the government and the trade unions.

The Argentine Industrial Union represents big business interests, national and foreign, in manufacturing industry.

Culture, education and sports: Argentina has some 1,700 cinemas, 287 museums and, in Buenos Aires, 60 theatres.

In 1974, 297 daily newspapers were published in the country, 11 of them in Buenos Aires with a daily circulation of 1,600,000 copies, as well as 1,765 periodicals published at various intervals, 960 cultural weeklies and more than 250 foreign-language publications.

Argentina has 35 television channels (in 1974), six of which are national, four provincial, and the others basically relay stations. In addition, there were 118 radio stations in operation in 1971.

4,410 book titles were published in 1971 and there are 1,514 public libraries in the country, eight of which have more than 100,000 volumes each.

Higher education is offered in 40 universities, 13 of which are national, 4 provincial, and 23 private.

In 1975, 596,736 students were enrolled in higher educational institutions, 1,243,058 attended secondary schools, and 3,805,454 pupils attended primary schools; 369,082 pupils attended pre-primary institutions, and 436,594 students were enrolled in extramural educational instituations.

Illiteracy among the population older than ten years amounts to 6.3% among men and 7.7% among women, but in the most backward parts of the country the illiteracy rate is three times higher than the national average.

The national sport is football, in which Argentina has been successful, taking the World Cup in 1978. Other sports enjoying popularity and success in Argentina include chess, athletics, boxing, basket-ball, rowing, sailing, hockey, cycling, motor racing and lawn tennis. The country has generally good sports facilities, particularly for football.

Public health: Attention given to public health in Argentina is not in keeping with the level of the country's economic development. Although life expectancy is high, with 64 years for men and 70 for women according to the 1965-1970 average, the infant mortality rate, which is 63 per 1,000 children under the age of twelve months according to 1976 figures, is rather high.

Another problem is the imbalance existing between medical care available in the large cities, mainly Buenos Aires, and in the interior. Thus the infant mortality rate is as high as 200 per 1,000 live births in the northwest, and of the country's 45,000 doctors, 31,000 are concentrated in Buenos Aires.

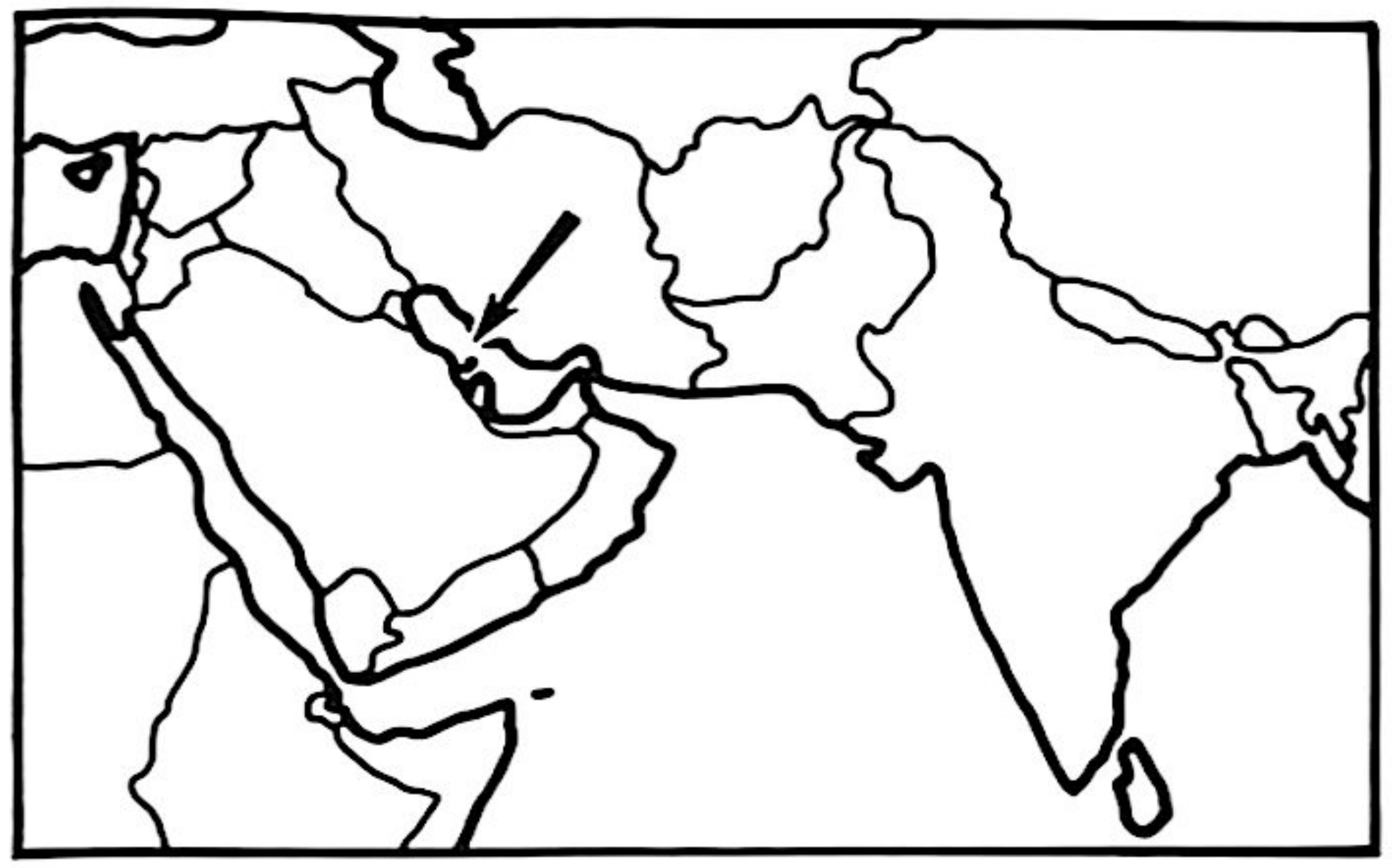
Since February 1977, the public health service, which had been free for more than a century, is no longer so and fees are now being charged for medical treatment. Already in the past, hospitalization fees had been instituted.

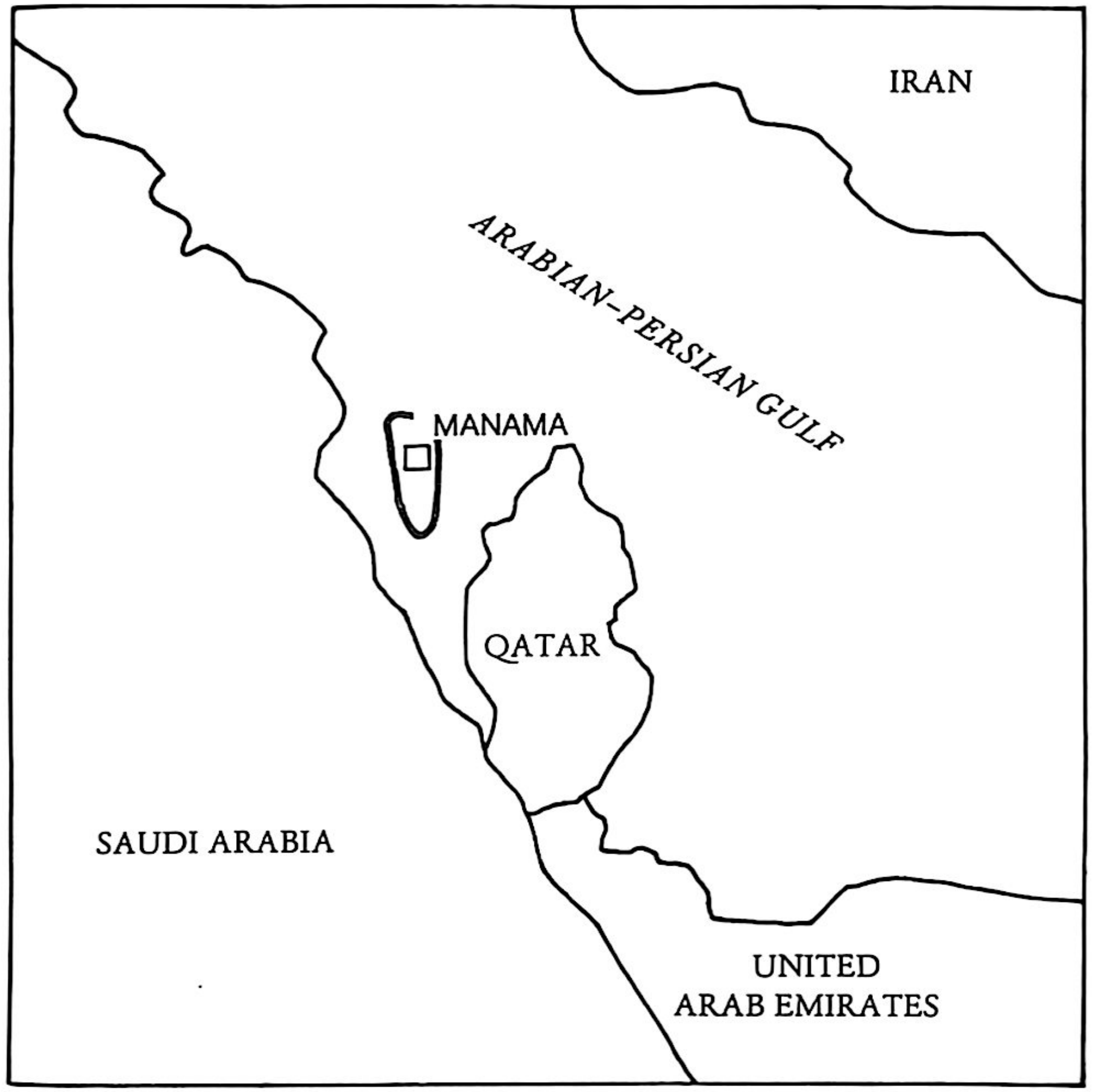
Religion: Freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed, but so is support of the Roman Catholic church, with the state exercising a "right of patronage" over the appointment of bishops. In the armed forces there are Roman Catholic vicars and chaplains.

In the second half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s, the progressive movement gained considerable importance in the ranks of the Argentine clergy and many priests became involved in one way or another in the social struggle.

Another important creed in Argentina is the Jewish religion, since the country has the largest Jewish community in all Latin America. There are also different Protestant churches.

BAHRAIN





Official name: The State of Bahrain.
Area: 662 sq.km.
Borders: Bahrain is an archipelago of 33 islands situated in the Persian Gulf some 18 miles from the eastern coast of Saudi Arabia and approximately the same distance from the Qatar Peninsula. The principal islands are those of Bahrain, which is the largest, Muharraq, Sitra, Umm An-Nassan, and Jeddah. South of Bahrain Island is the Hawar group of islands which are the subject of a dispute with Qatar.
Population: According to official figures, in 1979, Bahrain had 290,000 inhabitants, 78.1% being of an urban character. The annual rate of population growth is 2.5%. Approximately 80% of the population are ethnic Arabs, but there are also Omanis, Indians, Pakistanis, and Iranians.
Capital: Manama (190,000 inhabitants, 1977 estimate).
Principal cities: Muharraq (49,000 inh.), which used to be the capital until 1920, Riffaa, Sitra, and Isa Town, a new urban centre near Manama, which is to have a population of 35,000.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: August 14, Independence Day.
Geography: The island of Bahrain is sandy and flat with some oases; its main feature is the rocky hill of Jebel Dukhan, 135 m high, which is like a crater and is the sole geographical point of interest of the whole territory. The other islands have similar topography. Muharraq to the north and Sitra to the east are low-lying and are connected by causeway to the island of Bahrain.

The climate is desert-like in character. In the summer—from May to October— the temperature rises as high as 46.5°C and humidity is 10%.

Brief history: Ancient tombs have been found in the northern part of Bahrain Island, which are considered to be of Phoenician origin.

The first Europeans to occupy the islands were the Portuguese in 1507, but they were expelled from this area by the Arabs in 1602. However, these Arabs were driven out, in turn, by other Arabs who came from the vicinity of Kuwait and who established the Al Khalifa dynasty, which has been in power in Bahrain since 1787.

Great Britain began her penetration of the area through the East India Company. In 1847, the British government and the Sheikh of Bahrain signed a mutual defence treaty, and in 1861, Bahrain officially became a British protectorate, although in actual practice it had that status from 1820.

In 1880 and 1892, the ruling dynasty and Britain signed several treaties which mainly provided that Bahrain would not permit the use of its territory by a third power or would not establish relations with such a power without prior approval by the British Crown.

British troops militarily intervened in the islands on several occasions. In 1935, they established the principal British military base in the Gulf there in a move which provoked many protests by the population in the form of street demonstrations, mostly in the capital. The beginning of organized popular struggle against colonial rule dates from 1951, when the first ever workers' strike took place in the area.

In 1955, the British formed a small native, mercenary army. In 1968 it had 1,630 men under the command of 100 British officers. This garrison cost Britain 1,500,000 pounds annually.

In 1956, a popular uprising occurred, motivated by the critical economic situation which had developed in Bahrain. It was suppressed when the British navy intervened. The insurgents demanded, among other things, general elections for a Constitutional Assembly, a reform of the civil and criminal codes, a purge of the judiciary, and freedom to form trade unions. However, these demands were ignored by the then rulers of the country.

In contrast to the other small Gulf states, the popular struggle, waged in Bahrain for several decades, had a profound impact on the political life of the country. The early discovery of petroleum in 1925 and the beginning of its exploitation in 1932 resulted in the formation of a native working class. Another interesting factor is that the population of the small archipelago does not have a majority of foreign workers. According to the latest figures—for 1980—70% of the islands' inhabitants are native Bahrainis, which again is a departure from the situation prevailing in the other small Gulf states.

In 1965, the inhabitants of the capital took to the streets in one of the most important mass public demonstrations, which was, however, indiscriminately suppressed by the local and colonial authorities, leaving more than 100 persons dead and 1,000 wounded, while some 500 demonstrators were arrested. In response, more than 5,000 petroleum workers went on general strike, which lasted several weeks and was joined by other sections of the population.

The progressive forces proclaimed armed struggle as a method of ending the autocratic rule of the ruling family and foreign domination.

These actions were led by the National Progressive Front of Bahrain, which subsequently initiated a campaign of civil disobedience—a move resulting in its outlawing.

The government passed a so-called General Security Law which conferred on the Sheikh the power to order the detention of any individual suspected of "endangering the security of the territory" and authorized the Ministry of the Interior to imprison for as long as three years—without trial—any person considered suspect. After the expiration of this term the detainees could be banished from the territory without the right to return.

At the end of 1968, Great Britain, which already had more than 4,000 troops stationed in the country in her three powerful bases there—the strategic air base at Muharraq, the naval base at Jufair, and the army base at Humala—announced the withdrawal of these troops. The announcement at the same time supposed that the Emirates in the area would form a federation. In May 1970, the United Nations Security Council approved the independence of Bahrain in place of a merger with Iran, which until then had aspired to annex the islands. Independence thus became effective on August 14, 1971.

The new state, headed by Sheikh Isa Ibn Sulman Isa al-Khalifa and his brother Sheikh Hamman Isa Ibn al-Khalifa, the Heir Apparent who was in charge of defence matters, restructured the government, revoked the military treaties with Britain, and applied for admission to the Arab League and the United Nations.

In 1973, a new constitution was adopted, and, in December of the same year, the first parliamentary elections were held. The posts of Prime Minister, Minister of the Interior and Minister of Defence were retained by their original holders. Two new ministries were established—of information and of the interior.

There were 116 candidates for election to the legislature, while the Head of State would appoint a certain number of MPs.

The first parliamentary session was held on December 16, and was inaugurated by the Emir of Bahrain, who underlined his support for the Palestinian resistance movement.

The parliamentary elections were a victory for the progressive movement, which captured nine seats. However, the key posts in the government were given to members of the Emir's family. Bahrain became the second country in that region to have a parliament. It was preceded in this respect by Kuwait.

In 1974, the government signed a treaty with the United States, permitting the establishment of a military base in Bahrain. Once again, protests were raised and demonstratons held by workers' and progressive organizations. The government strongly reacted with the enactment of a law restricting civil rights, which was followed by arrests and large-scale dismissals to counter a new strike by petroleum workers demanding higher wages and better working conditions. The strike spread to other sectors of the country's population.

On August 25, 1975, the Emir dissolved the National Assembly and suspended the constitution under the pretext of a government crisis. At the time of its dissolution, the National Assembly was split in half in its allegiance. Half of its 42 members were in opposition to the government which, in turn, relied in its move on its ministers, who were members of the legislature, and on those members of parliament, who belonged to a group called the Religious Block.

As explained by the opposition, the decision to suspend parliamentary life was motivated by the growing political trend calling for the nationalization of the large foreign corporations in the country—banks, refineries, insurance companies, multinational oil corporations—and by demands to end the American military presence at the Jufair air base, which has been one of the focal points of the country's political life. The opposition leaders also claimed that Saudi influence had played a decisive role in recent years in the suspension of the parliament.

The popular opposition to the U.S. presence continued in the subsequent years as well. In 1980, large-scale demonstrations were held against that presence and for economic and political reforms.

Economy: Bahrain was one of the first Middle Eastern countries where petroleum extraction began. However, its proven petroleum reserves are small. According to 1977 estimates, its petroleum resources will be exhausted before the end of this century if the extraction continues at the 1977 rate of 336 million barrels per year.

The total petroleum output in 1980 was 2,500,000 metric tons. Bahrain's petroleum wealth is only partly owned by the state. BAPCO, the main crude petroleum extraction company, was 60% owned by Bahraini interests, while the remaining shares were held by the Standard Oil Company of California and by Texaco. In 1978 the Bahrain National Oil Company took over these shares, leaving to BAPCO only the refinery.

A large refinery at Awali has been in operation since 1936. With its present capacity of 250,000 barrels per day it is the second largest petroleum-refining plant in the Middle East. However, according to experts, its outdated equipment makes its operation too costly and therefore investments have been made to modernize it. The Awali refinery also refines petroleum from Saudi Arabia with which Bahrain shares the financing of offshore petroleum extraction at Saafa.

Natural gas is being mainly used as industrial fuel and its daily output amounts to some 300 million cubic feet.

Apart from petroleum exploitation, Bahrain's industry is limited. The most important non-petroleum industry is the ALBA aluminium foundry with an annual output of 120,000 tons. The ore is imported mostly from Australia. The aluminium produced by ALBA is used by a number of other local industries.

An important project for the future economic development of Bahrain is the construction of a giant dry dock at Ayab at the cost of more than 300 million dollars. Another, no less important industrial project is a chemical plant,which was opened in 1980.

Bahrain's principal port is Mina Sulman,which is also a major commercial centre in the entire Gulf region.

Non-petroleum exports passed the 60% mark of the country's total exports in 1978, although most of that figure involved re-exports. The main destinations of this export trade were Saudi Arabia, Japan, China, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and Great Britain.

On the other hand, Bahrain's principal suppliers are Great Britain, the United States, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, Australia and China.

The 1978 balance of trade was unfavourable for Bahrain,with exports totalling 1,893 million dollars and imports amounting to 2,046 million dollars.

Foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 614 million dollars in 1979. Per capita income was 4,377 dollars in 1978, while the gross national product represented 1,510 million dollars.

Petroleum production covers 70% of all budgetary expenditure. The 1979 national budget provided for income of 280 million dinars and expenditure of 280 million. The national currency is the dinar,whose rate of exchange was 0.377 per U.S. dollar in 1979.

Before the country's petroleum resources are exhausted, Bahrain's economy is being oriented towards the service industry and finance, given the virtual absence of agriculture due to the geographical conditions and the fact that land which may have been suited for farming has been taken up by other economic activities brought about by the country's industrial expansion, in the petroleum production sphere in particular. A very liberal banking law was enacted in 1976, which guarantees extraterritorial privileges to banking institutions. In 1979, there were 118 banks in Bahrain with assets in excess of 23,000 million dollars.

Government: The State of Bahrain is led by a Head of Government who presides over a cabinet.

In 1971, the proclamation of independence marked the actual beginning of the country's political life.

In the first six months of 1973, the Council drew up a constitution,which was adopted in June of that year. Under its provisions, the first elections to the National Assembly, which has a four-year term of office, were held in December, 1973, 22 members were elected to the 44-member Constitutional Council, while the remaining 22 seats were filled by appointees of the Emir. No political parties were permitted and thus all the 116 candidates ran as independents. In practice, however, the parliament was divided between conservative, moderate and radical members. In 1975, under the pretext of a governmental crisis, the Emir ordered the dissolution of the parliament. Since the dissolution of the National Assembly the government has been run by a cabinet, many of whose members belong to the Emir's family.

Armed Forces: Bahrain has some 2,500 troops.

Organizations: No political parties are legally permitted to exist and operate. The Popular Front Party of Bahrain, established in 1975 as an autonomous political organization is tied to the Popular Front for the Liberation of Bahrain, which was founded in 1959 and is made up of Communists and leftist forces.

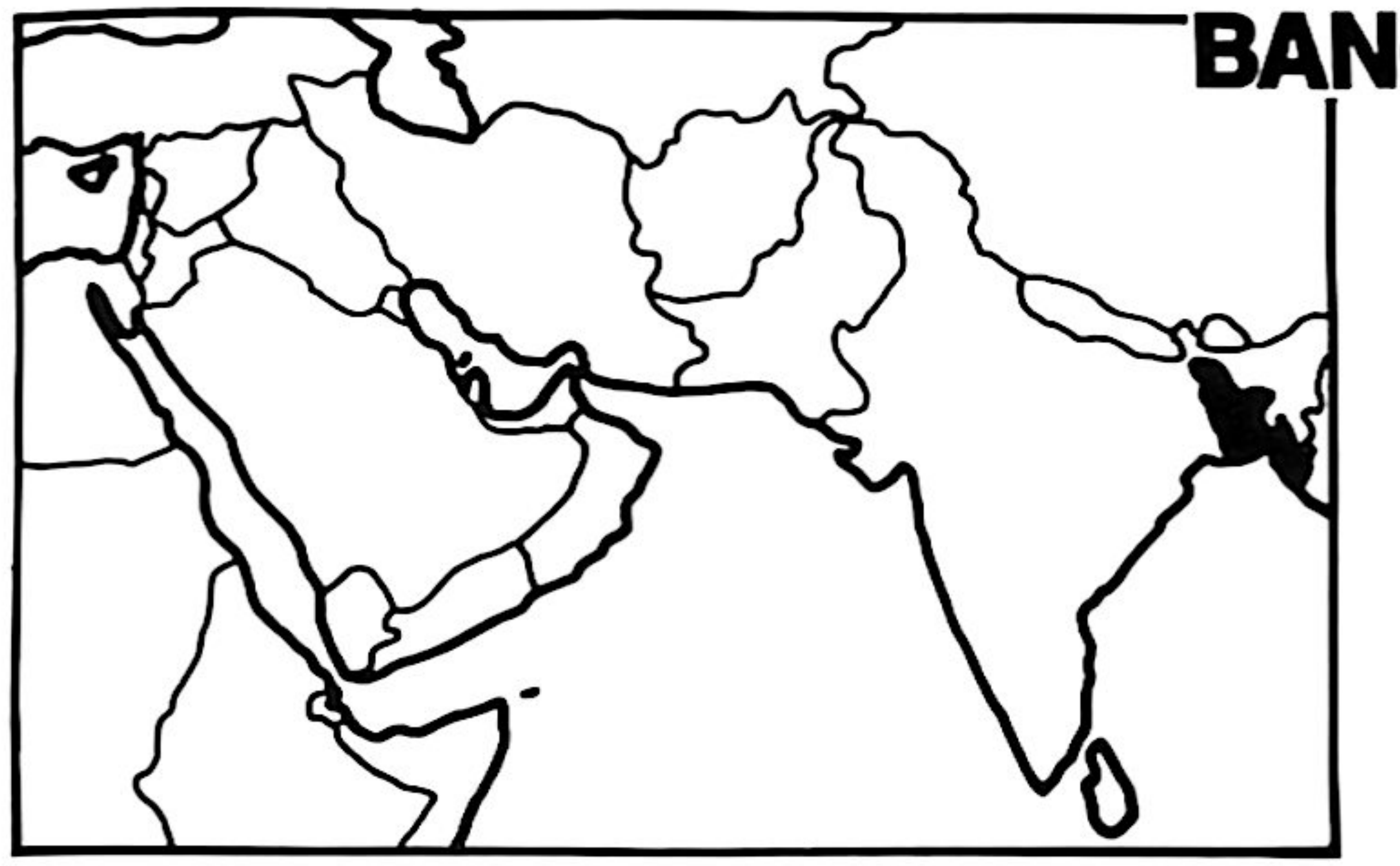
The constitution of 1973 has guaranteed the formation of trade unions, but these do not exist in all the branches of the national economy.

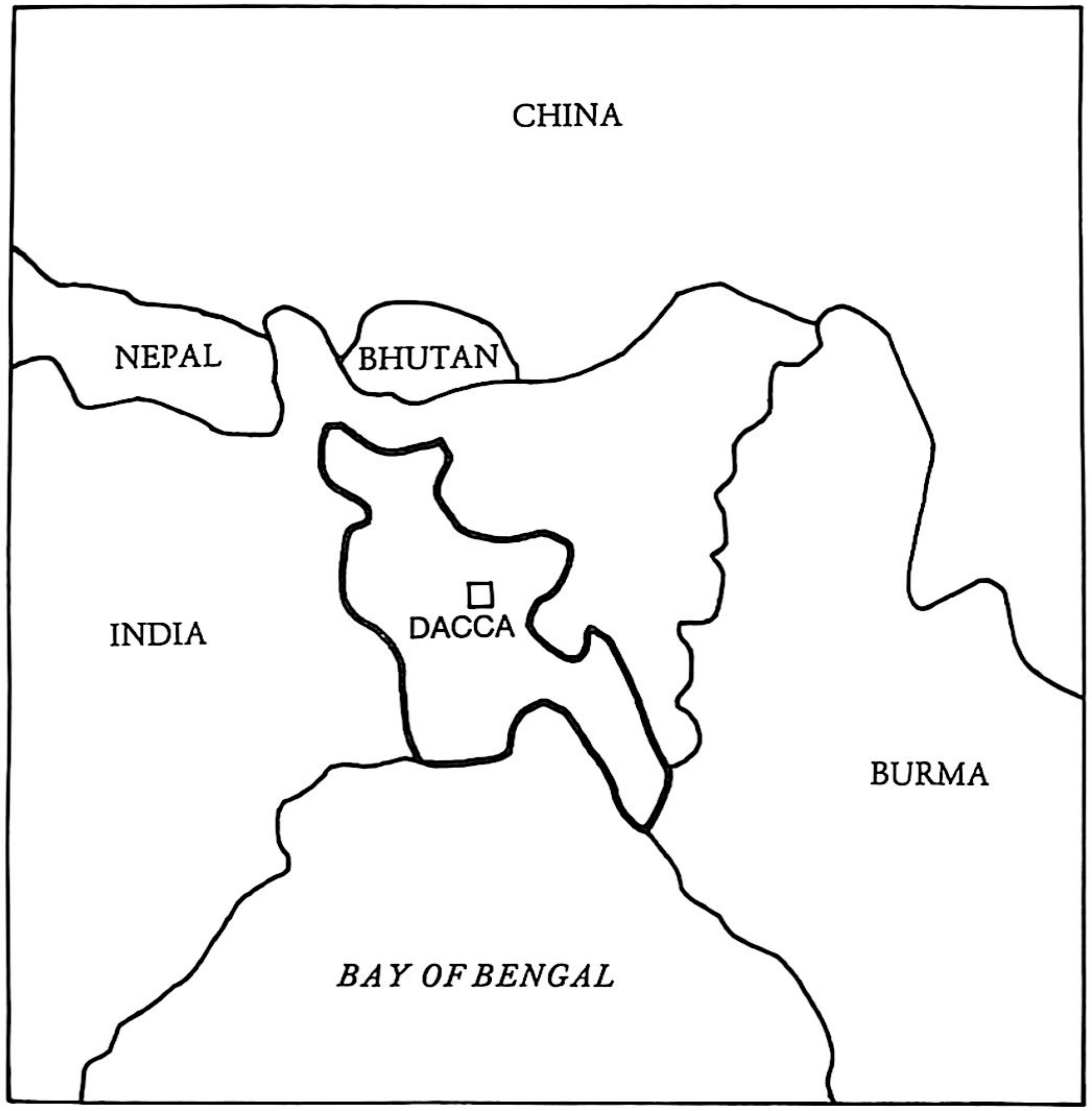
Education: Education is free. The 1978 budgetary outlays for education were 11.4 million dinars. In 1980, there was a record number of primary school pupils—72,000. There are also 57 centres for teaching adults to read and write, but close to 40% of the population are still illiterate. A university-level school—the Gulf Technical College—has been in existence since 1969, with an enrolment of 1,000 students.

Public health: Budgetary expenditure on public health amounted to 9.4 million dinars in 1977. Medical service is provided free to the population. There are 15 hospitals, a doctor for every 1,450 inhabitants, and a hospital bed for every 248 inhabitants.

Religion: 95% of Bahrain's population are Moslems equally divided between the Sunni branch of the Maliqi rite and the Shi'a branch of the Jaafari rite.

BANGLADESH




CHINA
NEPAL
BHUTAN
INDIA
DACCA
BURMA
BAY OF BENGAL

Official name: The People's Republic of Bangladesh.
Area: 143,998 sq.km.
Borders: Bangladesh is almost completely surrounded by Indian territory except for a short stretch of a common frontier with Burma in the southeast and its southern coast on the Bay of Bengal.
Population: 86,643,000 inhabitants in 1979. In the period 1977-1979 the average annual rate of population growth was 4%
Capital: Dacca (1,700,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Chittagong, Khulna and Narayangaj.
Languages: Bengali, Bihari, Hindi and English are also spoken.
Public holidays: March 26, Independence Day (1971)
Geography: The territory of Bangladesh, which is uniformly flat, extends east of India on the plain of Bengal crossed by the Ganges and Brahmaputra Rivers. It also includes the vast delta system of the two rivers and their tributaries, which empty into the Bay of Bengal.

A large part of Bangladesh has the fertile soil of alluvial plains with plenty of precipitation from a regular cycle of rains. However, there are also many marshes and areas covered with dense jungle vegetation. The coasts are relatively flat and there is only one port—at Chittagong—which can handle deep-draught vessels.

Bangladesh has a tropical monsoon climate with the median temperature of 19° C from April and again in special intensity in June and September, causing the heavy floods which occur every year. Besides the monsoons, Bangladesh suffers from hurricanes which hit especially the coastal area.

Brief history: The history of Bangladesh is closely tied to the history of the Indian subcontinent as a whole. In the 12th century, Moslem invaders forced their religion on Bengal, whose eastern part—the Bangladesh of today—had known great splendour under Mongol rule in the 16th century, when it developed its own language and culture. Dacca became the capital of the Viceroyalty of Bengal in 1608, but its political importance declined after 1704 when the Viceroy's seat was moved to Murshidabad.

The establishment of British colonial rule accelerated the decline of East Bengal. At the beginning of the 19th century, Dacca began to suffer from commercial competition posed by industrial goods manufactured in factories established by the British in West Bengal with its predominantly Hindu population. The economic collapse of Dacca soon followed and the city's population rapidly dropped because of its exodus in search of work. However, a revival of East Bengal began in the middle of the same century as the cultivation of jute was introduced and expanded.

The economic and social differences between the western and eastern parts of Bengal still further widened the contradictions between their Hindu and Moslem communities. While the administration and political power in Bengal were kept to some extent by representatives of the powerful Hindu castes, most of the Moslems had to adjust to their postion of agricultural labourers without any community representation. The conflicts erupting as a result of the social antagonism between the two communities were ascribed by the British historians to religious problems.

The separation of the two parts of Bengal was furthered still more by the formation of the Province of East Bengal and of Assam.

This move produced dissatisfaction especially among the Hindu representatives in the British colonial administration, and in 1911 all of Bengal was re-united.

Under the Montfort Reform, the majority Moslem population of East Bengal was granted some political representation, but continued to be deprived of any economic and social power.

In any case, the idea of separatism had already gained in importance and was definitely realized in 1947, when the British promoted the formation of India and Pakistan on the basis of the predominant religion in the two states—Hinduism in India and Islam in Pakistan.

Thus, East Bengal became the eastern part of Pakistan, separated from West Pakistan by some 1,700 km of Indian territory and tied to it only by a common religion.

Apart from its different language, tradition and customs with respect to West Pakistan, East Bengal found itself almost immediately reduced to the position of a mere producer of raw materials for West Pakistani industry.

For these reasons, nationalist sentiments began to grow in strength in former East Bengal almost from the very establishment of the Pakistani state.

In 1948, many demonstrations were held, demanding the institution of Bengali as the official language in East Pakistan in place of Urdu, which had been imposed there by the leaders of West Pakistan.

National discontent continued to grow. In 1951, a group of Bengali politicians, including Mujibur Rahman, founded the Awami League. This political party with its petty-bourgeois ideology did not only champion the interests of the middle and Bengali petty-bourgeoisie, but also conveyed the national sentiments of the great masses of people who demanded total autonomy from the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie of West Pakistan.

The battle for the rights of the Bengali people intensified especially after the coup staged by Marshal Mohammed Ayub Khan in 1959.

In 1966, the Awami League presented a six-point programme which included the granting to East Pakistan of its own currency, the levy of internal taxes and negotiation of commercial treaties with other countries, and would have left to the central power the responsibility for the conduct of foreign relations and national defence.

Marshal Ayub Khan was replaced in 1968 by General Mohammed Yagha Khan, who took charge of the central government with the pledge to settle the Bengali problem. At the beginning of 1970, general elections were held in the country for the first time for the establishment of a Constituent Assembly.

In these elections, the Awami League won more than half of the 313 seats, with the remaining seats going to the People's Party of Pakistan, headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, which had its power base in West Pakistan. A period of controversy followed between the two political groups, to which General Yahya Khan put an end by annulling the election results. The Bengalis then launched a movement of national disobedience against the Pakistani administration in Dacca, and on March 26, 1971, Mujibur Rahman proclaimed the People's Republic of Bangladesh. The central government outlawed the Awami League, arrested Rahman, and unleashed military repression.

The Pakistani army and paramilitary groups made up of members of the Bihari minority and known as "Razakares" committed mass murders and used other terrorist methods to suppress the Bengalis. It is estimated that some three million people died under this reign of terror, while some ten million people fled to India, which was thus indirectly affected by the situation in the neighbouring country.

On April 12, 1971, a Bangladesh government-in-exile was formed in a frontier community in the Indian state of West Bengal. Meanwhile, in Bangladesh proper, guerilla units, known as the "Muhti Bahini", were formed and fought the Pakistani army.

In September, the Bangladesh government-in-exile was reorganized to permit the inclusion of other political groups which, like the Awami League, were fighting for the liberation of their country. On both occasions, Mujibur Rahman was unanimously elected President, while Syed Nazrul Islam, an intellectual, took over the office of Interim President for the period when Rahman was imprisoned in West Pakistan.

On December 7, India recognized the government of Bangladesh and Pakistan, in turn, declared war on India. The Indian army undertook operations in support of the Bengali fighters, while at the same time engaging Pakistani forces in Kashmir, Sind and Punjab.

After its recognition by India, the Bangladesh government-in-exile again reorganized itself, establishing a 35-member Central Committee and a Cabinet under the leadership of Tajuddin Ali Ahmed, a leftist politician who was a member of the Moslem League and who at that time also held the office of Secretary-General of the Awami League.

On December 17, the Pakistani troops surrendered to the joint command of the Indian and Bangladesh armies. Some days later, a coalition government was formed under Prime Minister Nurul Amin.

Rahman was released from prison in January 1972. In April of the same year, the Constituent National Assembly began its session with the participation of the members elected in December 1970. It adopted a draft constitution for Bangladesh.

One of the first steps taken by the government was the nationalization of the jute, textile and sugar industries. Most of the affected factories were owned by Pakistanis who had fled Bangladesh.

In September 1973, the Awami League, the Communist Party and the National People's Party formed a coalition—the Worker-Peasant People's Front—under the leadership of Mujibur Rahman. At the beginning of October of that year, the first parliamentary elections were held and the National Awami League won 289 of the 300 seats.

The Dacca government was reconstructed for the purpose of implementing a large-scale programme of economic and social reforms. The programme stirred up the rightist groups,which unleased a wave of violence that swept the whole country.

On its own part, the Awami League began to split politically and the government wavered in its actions, in many cases adopting negative decisions. Only the personality of the Awami League's head, President Rahman, still enjoyed popular sympathy.

In August 1975, the crisis reached its climax with the assassination of Mujibur Rahman and the overthrow of his government in a military coup. Khondokar Mushtaque Ahmed was appointed the new President of Bangladesh.

The new government declared its intention to maintain the country's ties with the British Commonwealth, as well as its support of the struggle of the Arab peoples for the recovery of the territories occupied by Israel, and of non-alignment.

Three months later, on November 3, Mushtaque Ahmed resigned and Abu Sadat Mohammed Sayem was appointed in his place. On November 30, Sayem appointed Major General Ziaur Rahman as military administrator of the country.

The events of August 1975 also affected the relations between Bangladesh and India, and contradictions developed between the governments in Dacca and New Delhi, which continued for a number of years.

On April 21, 1977, Sayem resigned for reasons of ill health and General Ziaur Rahman assumed the presidency. At the head of a military government, Rahman adopted several measures directed against the political left and in November of that year outlawed the Communist Party.

On June 3, 1978, the first presidential elections in the country's history were held. There were two candidates for the office—Major-General Ziaur Rahman, the incumbent President, and General Ataul Ghani Osmani, a hero of the war of independence in 1971. Rahman won the election with 15 million votes—77% of the ballots cast—against his opponent's 4 million.

President Ziaur Rahman dissolved his Council of Advisers and organized a new cabinet of 28 ministers and two ministers of state on June 9, 1978. He himself took the portfolios of Defence and Finance. There was no office of Prime Minister.

In February 1979, parliamentary elections were held after Rahman had agreed to lift press censorship and to free political prisoners. Rahman's own party consolidated its hold on the government by winning two-thirds of the contested seats. Two months later martial law was suspended and in November of that year the state of emergency was abolished.

Nevertheless, the country continues to be subjected to strict military control because Ziaur Rahman has been unable to stop the operations of an insurgent guerilla group known as "Shanti Bahini". In May 1980, this group had a force of about a thousand men hiding in the forests around Chittagong and continued frustrating pacification efforts of the Rahman government by threatening selective execution of those tribal leaders who accepted the offers made by the Dacca government. The guerilla activities involving the realization of these threats resulted in the killing of 38 persons in the first half of 1980.

Economy: The economy of Bangladesh is basically agrarian with nearly 85% of the country's labour force being engaged in agricultural production. 80% of the cultivated land is used for rice growing, but even this quantity of rice does not cover the country's own needs. In 1979, only 10% of the cultivated land was irrigated. Jute and tea are the main export crops, with jute representing 90% of the total world trade in this commodity.

In the period 1978-1979, the total value of Bangladesh exports amounted to 9,039,000,000 takas—the national currency—and of that sum, more than 60% (6,176,000,000 takas) were proceeds from jute and tea sales.

Bangladesh needs approximately 1,000,000,000 dollars of aid. 75% of its development programme is financed by foreign assistance, of which the United States is the principal provider. In the period 1978-1981, 80,000,000 dollars were supplied by the U.N. Development Programme.

In the Period 1977-1978, Bangladesh produced 12,760,000 tons of rice and in the same period reported 30,520,000 head of cattle, 1,492,000 buffaloes, 1,001,000 sheep, 12,399,000 goats, and 85,663,333 poultry. It produced 170,876 tons of beef, 5,300 tons of buffalo meat, 1,754 tons of mutton, 43,186 tons of goat meat, and 61,736 tons of poultry meat. The fish catch was 835,000 tons.

Industrial production included 509,000 tons of jute cloth, 85,000,000 yards of cotton fabrics, 97,000,000 pounds of cotton fibre, 323,000 tons of cement, 124,000 tons of steel ingots, 207,000 tons of rolled steel products, 959,000 tons of petroleum products, and 290,000 tons of urea.

The Bangladesh monetary unit is the taka. The 1979-1980 national budget showed a surplus of 6,182,000,000 takas, but at the same time development costs amounted to 20,700,000,000 takas. In the same period Bangladesh received 822,000,000 dollars of foreign aid, of which 258,000,000 dollars were provided by the United States, 212,000,000 by Japan, and 130,000,000 by Canada, the three major providers of foreign assistance. The balance of trade in the preceding year showed a deficit of 11,038,100,000 takas, with 18,216,300,000 takas of imports and 7,178,200,000 takas of exports.

Government: Bangladesh is a republic with a presidential system of government. The Presisdent is elected by popular vote for a term of five years. He appoints a Council of Ministers from among the 330 members of parliament, of whom 300 are elected by popular vote on the basis of universal suffrage. The remaining 30 members are women elected in the first session of the new parliament. The parliamentary term of office is also five years.

Armed forces: Bangladesh has an army of 64,000 men, a navy of 3,5000 men, and an air force of 3,000 men. There are also paramilitary forces of some 66,000 men. The military budget in the fiscal year 1978-1979 was 1,756,000.000 takas.

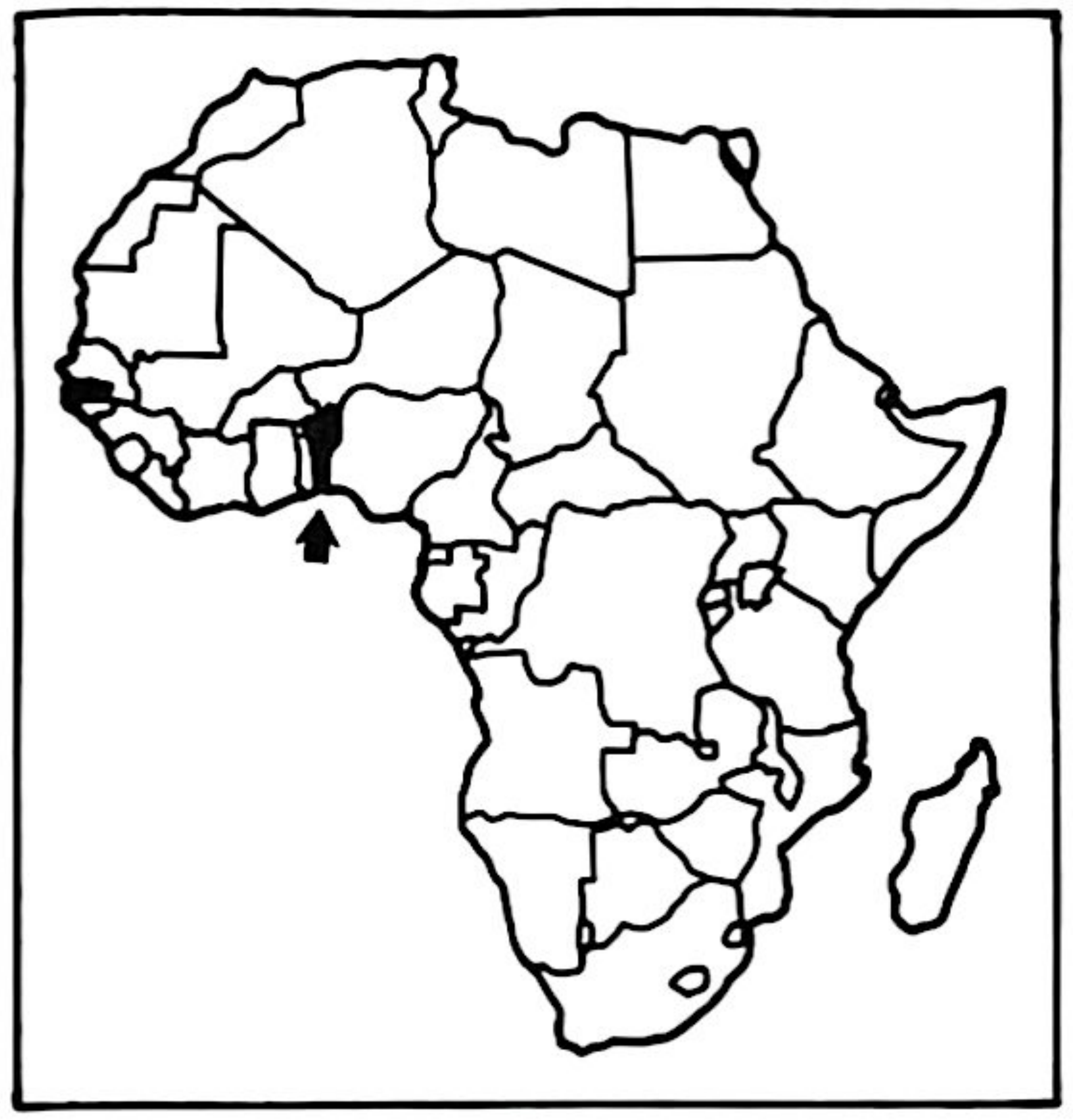
Organizations: There are 29 political parties in Bangladesh, of which the most influential are the National Party of Bangladesh, which won 221 parliamentary seats in the February 1979 elections, the Awami League, which won 39 seats, the Moslem League of Bangladesh, which holds 18 seats, and the National Socialist Party Jatiya Samajantirk Dal), which won 8 seats.

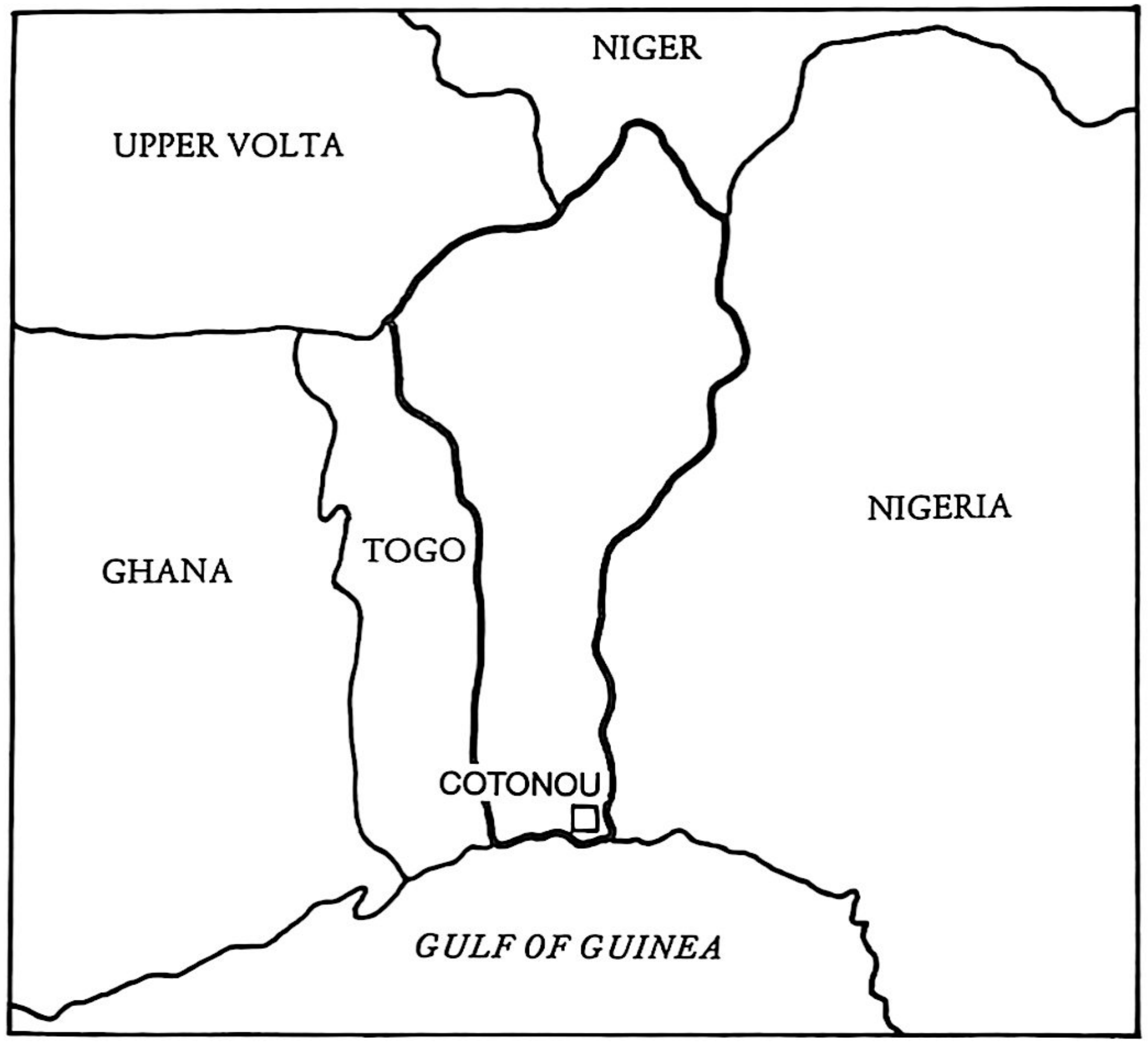
Education: In 1978, Bangladesh had 39,914 primary schools with 8,531,000 pupils secondary schools with 1,943,000 students, 588 vocational schools and institutes with 393,000 students, and 6 universities with an enrolment of 32,000 students.

Public health: In 1976, Bangladesh had a hospital capacity of 16,600 beds. Half of all the practising doctors (7,663 in 1975) are to be found in Dacca.

Religion: More than 85% of the Bangladesh population are Moslems. The rest are mostly Buddhists and Hindus. The constitution guarantees freedom of religion, but in 1977 it was amended in order to institute Islam as one of its principal guidelines.

BENIN





Official name: The People's Republic of Benin.
Area: 112,622 sq.km.
Borders: In the northwest Benin borders on Upper Volta, in the northeast on Niger, in the south on the Atlantic Ocean, in the east on Nigeria, and in the west on Togo.
Population: 3,326,000 inhabitants. The average annual rate of population growth in the period 1970-1974 was 3.1%. The principal tribes are the Fon, the Yoruba, the Adja, the Dendi, the Fulani, the Somba, and the Aizo.
Capital: Cotonou (200,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Abomey, Ouidah, Parakou, and Porto Novo.
Languages: French is the official language. Also spoken are Fon, Mina, Yoruba and Dendi.
Public holidays: November 30, Revolution Day.
Geography: The territory of Benin may be divided into five natural geographical regions: the coast, the Barre region, the Dahomey Plain, the Atacora Massif, and the Niger Plain.

The coastal region is low, flat and sandy with many lagoons, there are large sand banks with coconut-tree groves. In the west, the Grand Popo lagoon extends beyond the country's frontiers into Togo, while in the east the Porto Novo lagoon provides a fine waterway leading to Nigeria's port city of Lagos, although it is not much in use in this respect at the present. Benin's rivers empty into the sea through the Grand Popo and Cotonou.

Beyond the coastal region lies the Barre region characterized by its light clay soil. It is a fertile plain with palm groves, but the Lama Depression is filled with a large swamp stretching between Abomey and Allada. The terrain is mostly flat, but there are some hills rising from it to the maximum altitude of 396.5 m.

The Dahomey Plain, which extends through the districts of Abomey, Ketou and Aplahoue, is actually made up of three plains.

The Atacora massif in the westernmost part of the country is a continuation of the mountain range rising in Togo and runs from the southwest to the northeast. It reaches its highest point at the altitude of 654.5 m.

The Niger Plain in the northeast of the country descends to the Niger River valley and its soil is clayey. Besides the Niger, which with its tributaries Mekrou, Alibori and Sota irrigates the northeastern part of the country, Benin's principal river is the Oueme, 450 km long. However, there are other large rivers as well, such as the Couffo and the Mono.

Benin has two well differentiated climatic zones: in the south the climate is sub-equatorial with two rainy and two dry seasons, while in the north the climate is tropical with two seasons—a dry and a rainy one.

Brief history: The present-day population of Benin is the result of migrations of the Yoruba and the Bariba peoples from the east, of the Mina, the Guin, the Basseda and the Ouindi-Ouindi, the Bezatche and the Tchioubouli from the west, and of the Temba, the Gourmantche, the Dendi, the Dirma and the Peul from the north. The first contacts of native inhabitants with Europeans date back to the 15th century, when the Portuguese landed on Benin's coast.

Two centuries later the slave trade began to grow, supplying slaves to the plantations of America. The territory of Benin was one of the most exploited African areas in this respect, and many of its inhabitants perished on those plantations unable to withstand the torment of slavery, while others died on the Atlantic Ocean as a result of the terrible conditions prevailing on the slave ships.

Between 1752 and 1757, the slave trade was run in Porto Novo under the reign of De Messe who was inspired by the Portuguese Eucaristos de Campos.

The historical formation of Benin was basically determined by two migratory movements—of the Houeda who gave the name to the town of Ouidah, and the Agassouvi who eventually established three kingdoms, namely those of Allada, of Porto Novo and of Abomey. The last of those had the character of an empire at the time of the arrival of the colonialists.

King Ghezo (1818-1858), a great reformer and conqueror, enjoyed the longest and most prestigious reign in Abomey and saw the transition of the coastal area's economy to trade in palm oil.

King Socji of Porto Novo asked France in 1861 for a protectorate in order to counter the rivalry of King Nosounou of Lagos (in Nigeria), which under an agreement with the British, concluded that year, became a British colony. A decree dated July 19, 1883, confirmed the establishment of a French protectorate over the territories of Petit Popo, Grand Popo, Porto Securo and Agoue.

On December 29, 1889, King Glele died in Abomey and was succeeded by his son Kondo who took the name of Behazin. The new king led a brave resistance against the French, which began in 1890 and ended four years later with the separation of the territory of Allada from the Kingdom of Abomey, where Behazin's brother Goutohili was appointed king. Behazin's military operations were suppressed by the force of the modern French arms, he himself was captured and was deported first to Martinique, then to Blida, and finally to Algeria, where he died in 1906. Because of his brave resistance, Behazin is considered today Benin's national hero.

In 1894, the French established the Colony of Dahomey and its Dependencies. In 1904, when French West Africa was officially created, that territory was proclaimed a colony—named Dahomey— and was incorporated into the new unit.

The history of Dahomey is closely linked with that of Togo because of colonization factors and because of frontier disputes regarding the southeastern part of Dahomey's territory. From 1934 to 1936, the budgetary austerity measures imposed by France with respect to her overseas possessions motivated a union between Togo and Dahomey. The Lieutenant-Governor of Dahomey was at the same time the Commissioner for Togo.

The end of World War II brought about a disintegration of the French colonial empire. In 1946, the African Democratic Reunion (RDA) was founded at a congress held in Bamako, and elected as its president Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast.

A Progressive Dahomey Union (UPD) was founded in 1946-1947 under the leadership of Sourou Migan Apity, Hubert Maga and Emile Zinsou. Later, the UPD split into several factions.

In 1956, the French National Assembly passed the "Framework Law", which is also known as the Deferre-Boigny Act and which granted as a concession partial autonomy to the French colonial territories. In the same year Justin Ahomadeghe, an Abomey leader, established the Dahomey Democratic Union (UDD) which at that time was linked with the RDA.

After having voted "yes" in the referendum called by President de Gaulle in 1958, Dahomey decided to join the French Community of Nations and was proclaimed an autonomous republic in the same year. In May 1959, a Council of Entente was formed as a regional organization embracing Upper Volta, the Ivory Coast, Niger, Togo and Dahomey, to which Benin belongs to this day.

On August 1, 1960, France granted formal independence to Dahomey.

At that time, the post of Premier was held by Hubert Maga, who had occupied it since the resignation of Apithy in 1959. Thus Maga became the first President of the Republic of Dahomey. However, in 1963 he was overthrown in a coup led by Christophe Alphonse Soglo, who seized power in the country, dissolved the parliament and suspended the constitution. In 1964, Apithy returned to head the state, but a year later, in 1965, he was again deposed by the army and Soglo once more occupied the presidency. He formed a Committee of National Reconstruction (CRN) which was replaced four months later by a Military Committee of Vigilance (CMV).

Soglo was overthrown in 1967 by a military coup and Lieutenant-Colonel Alley was appointed by the Council of National Reconstruction to hold the presidency. A new constitution was approved in 1968, but was not accepted by Alley,who refused to recognize the results of the elections held that year and supported the army's candidate, Emile Zinsou.

Zinsou was confirmed as President in a referendum held in July 1968.

In the same year, Maga tried to eliminate two other tribal leaders—Apithy and Ahom Ahomadegbe—but only 26% of the voters went to the polls.

On December 10, 1969, a coup led by Maurice Komandete overthrew Emil Zinsou and the former assumed the presidency.

The army intervened once more in 1970 and drew up a third constitution,which gave the presidency of Dahomey the character of a triumvirate. From 1970 to 1976, the country was to be governed successively by Maga (1970-1972), Ahomadegbe (1972-1974) and Apithy (1974-1976). Maga completed his term of office, but on October 26, 1972, Lieutenant-Colonel Mathieu Kerekou put an end to Dahomey's pro-Western governments.

The present government adopted nationalist measures aimed at the consolidation of national unity, fight against nepotism, and elimination of official curruption. Since its assumption of power, radical changes went into effect throughout the country. The national economy was placed under state control in a process which culminated with the nationalization of the key branches of the economy. The new government placed stress on agricultural development since it viewed agriculture as the base for the future progress of the country.

A National Revolutionary Council (CNR) was established in September 1973 as the supreme governmental body charged with the construction of a new society.

On November 30, 1974, the Dahomey government proclaimed its Marxist-Leninist orientation and its socialist position. On the same day a year later, the People's Revolutionary Party of Benin (PRPB) was founded, associating the revolutionary vanguard of the country, which was given the name Benin as a symbol of the new society being built there; the national flag was also changed.

In May 1976, the People's Revolutionary Party of Benin held its first extraordinary congress, which defined the following stages in the country's revolutionary process:

(1) The stage of the revolutionary movement of national liberation, which by then had been concluded for all practical purposes; its objective was to do away completely with imperialist domination in the economic and cultural spheres, and to consolidate the country's political independence.

(2) The stage of the people's democratic revolution currently under development: its objective is to eliminate completely the economic base of imperialism through the gradual assumption of control by the revolutionary state of all the vital sectors of the national economy, to organize an agrarian reform in order to change radically the relations of production in the rural areas, and to develop national culture and education on a new basis.

(3) The stage of the socialist revolution proper, which will involve the extension of the socialist relations of production in all sectors, the construction of the material and technological bases of socialism, and the institution of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

While the congress was in session, Benin was invaded by mercenaries. Transport aircraft landed at Cotonou airport with assault troops made up of European and African mercenaries with combat gear on board. After having seized the airport, a group of the mercenaries tried to occupy the Presidential Palance, but the Benin armed forces with the people's support repelled the aggression and the surviving mercenaries fled in the planes that had brought them in.

The Benin government seized from the mercenaries many documents showing French, Gabonese and Moroccan involvement in the abortive invasion. The operation was commanded by Robert Denard, a mercenary with close ties to French and United States secret services.

On August 29, 1977, the National Revolutionary Council approved a new constitution and the country's first national development plan. Elections were held on November 20, 1979, to choose 336 members of a People's Revolutionary Assembly. The majority of these members are representatives of workers and peasants. In February 1980, the Assembly elected under the provisions of the new constitution Mathieu Kerekou as President for a term of five years. At the same time it approved the composition of a National Executive Council. Kerekou declared at its session his firm resolve to follow a path leading to the deepening of the revolutionary process in the country.

On July 15, 1980, the Standing Committee of the National Revolutionary Assembly adopted plans for the formation of local bodies of state power, and in January 1981 the creation of state and judiciary organs was another step in the process of establishing national institutions. Kerekou underlined the importance of creating organs of people's power.

In February 1981, the first extraordinary session of the National Revolutionary Assembly approved a programme of production and investments, as well as the national budget, which stressed the need of giving priority to the production of articles of daily necessity.

In its foreign policy, the government of Benin has called for expansion of relations of friendship and for non-alignment, and extended its diplomatic relations with China, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, the German Democratic Republic, Guinea-Bissau, Cuba and Argentina.

It condemned the racist regimes of South Africa and Rhodesia—before that country had gained independence as Zimbabwe—and broke off relations with Israel in the wake of the fourth Arab-Israeli war.

In the same line, Benin supported the people of Vietnam in their fight against American aggression and showed solidarity with the people of Angola when their country was invaded by South African and Zairean trops. President Kerekou also expressed support for the independence struggle waged by the Saharaoui people.

In 1977 Benin organized and hosted a world conference against the use of mercenaries, which was held in Cotonou.

At the OAU summit conference held in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum in July 1978, Benin was one of the countries which most strongly opposed plans for the formation of an African intervention force.

Economy: Benin's economy is based on agriculture which is pursued on 1,546,000 hectares of the total area of 11,262,000 hectares of arable land by 52.3% of the economically active population, estimated at 1,318,000 in 1970.

According to FAO figures, Benin produced in 1978, 7,000 tons of millet, 75,000 tons of sorghum, 13,000 tons of cotton seed, 6,000 tons of cotton fibre, 25,000 tons of dried beans, 80,000 tons of palm nuts, 60,000 tons of peanuts, 250,000 tons of maize, 600,000 tons of manioc, 600 tons of castor oil, and 3,000 tons of copra.

The forests produced 2,160,000 cu.m of timber in 1973.

In the livestock sector there were in 1978, 730,000 head of cattle, 650,000 goats, 850,000 sheep, and 370,000 pigs. The fish catch was 24,900 tons in 1977.

Benin's basically light industry (textiles, footwear, ceramics) produced 25,000 tons of palm oil in 1977, 112,000 tons of cement in 1972, and 5,000,000 kWh of electic power in 1977.

There is no mining industry in Benin, although the country does have deposits of iron and chromium ores, as well as off-shore petroleum.

The national merchant marine had five ships in 1975 with the total tonnage of 656 registered tons.

According to available figures, Benin's GNP amounted to 770,000,000 dollars in 1978, and its per capita GNP to 230 dollars. The national budget for 1978 was balanced at 23,210,000,000 CFA francs, while the 1977 balance of trade showed a deficit of 52,712,000,000 CFA francs (60,354,000,000 CFA francs of imports and 7,642,000,000 CFA francs of exports). The country's foreign debt was 93,700,000 dollars in 1975, according to World Bank figures, while its foreign-exchange reserves stood at 20,600,000 dollars in 1977. There are no available statistics on the cost of living. The national currency is the CFA franc.

Government: Under the constitution adopted at the beginning of 1977, the President of the Republic is at the same time the head of state, the head of the National Executive Council, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces, and the chairman of the National Defence Commission. He is elected every three years and may be re-elected. He promulgates the laws, appoints the members of the National Executive Council, and is accountable to the People's National Assembly and to the chairman of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party of Benin.

The National Administrative Council is the supreme administrative and executive body. It is made up of the President of the Republic, ministers and chairmen of the provincial administrative bodies. It coordinates and controls the work of the ministries and of lower executive and administrative bodies. It has a Standing Committee whose members are appointed by the President of the Republic and which is in charge of the management, operation and control of the affairs of state.

Revolutionary Councils are the bodies of state power at individual levels of local government—in the provinces, districts, communes and localities. Each of these councils has an executive body. The head of the executive secretariat at the basic level is a village delegate, at the commune level it is the mayor, and at the district level the chairman of the Revolutionary Administrative Committee.

The State Administrative Committees in the provinces are headed by Prefects. They are appointed by the Revolutionary National Assembly on the proposal of the Central Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party of Benin.

Armed forces: In 1979, Benin's armed forces were made up of 2,200 soldiers organized in two infantry battalions and of a small air force of 100 men. In addition, a paramilitary corps has 1,000 men.

Organizations: The People's Revolutionary Party of Benin (PRPB) was founded on November 30, 1974, just as was the National Union of Benin Trade Unions (UNSTB).

The PRPB, which is the only political party in the country, held its first congress in May 1976.

Culture, education and sports: Promotion of culture among the masses of people is one of the great concerns of the Benin government. Fight against ignorance has priority in the government's plans with the objective of eliminating the backwardness inherited in this field from the period of colonialism and necolonialism.

The government is engaged in pursuing a literacy campaign in the native languages. Libraries and centres of people's culture are being opened, just as evening theatres and musical and dance groups. One measure adopted for the purpose of reviving the traditional arts on a new basis is the organization of cultural weeks at all levels.

The greatest advances in the cultural field have been scored in education. In 1965, there were 77,800 children attending public primary schools, and 52,900 children attended private schools on that level. The primary school attendance reported in 1970 was 186,000 children, and five years later, i.e.,only three years after the victory of the revolution, the number of children attending primary schools had risen to 332,000.

A profound educational reform transformed the system of schools, placing it on a basis conforming more to the national reality and on the socialist positions pursued by the revolution.

A combination of education and productive and political activities prepares the youth of Benin for the construction of a new society.

In 1977, all education in Benin was decreed free by the state.

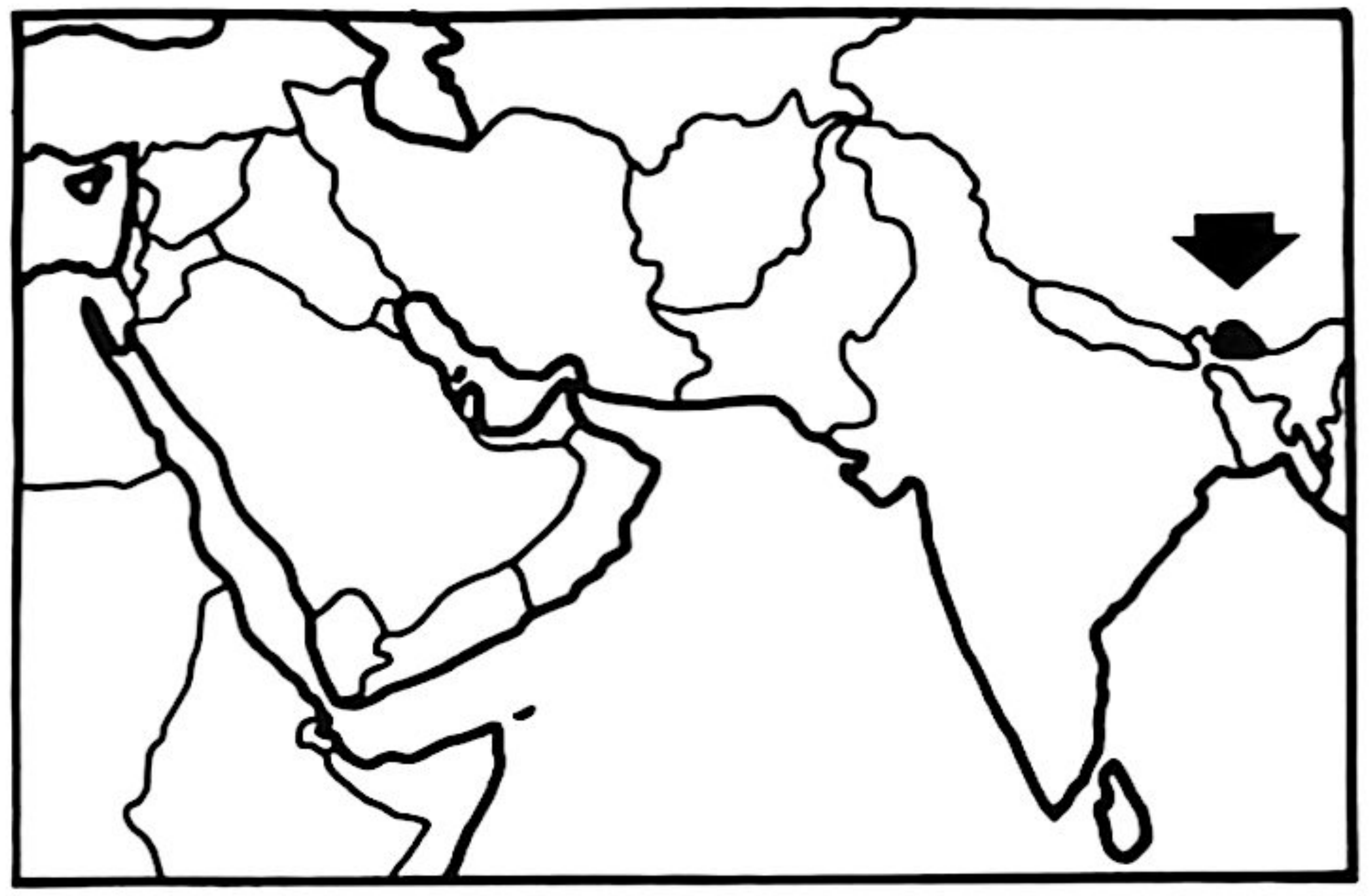
Benin has a university, founded in Cotonou, the capital, in 1970. It has a student body of 3,000.

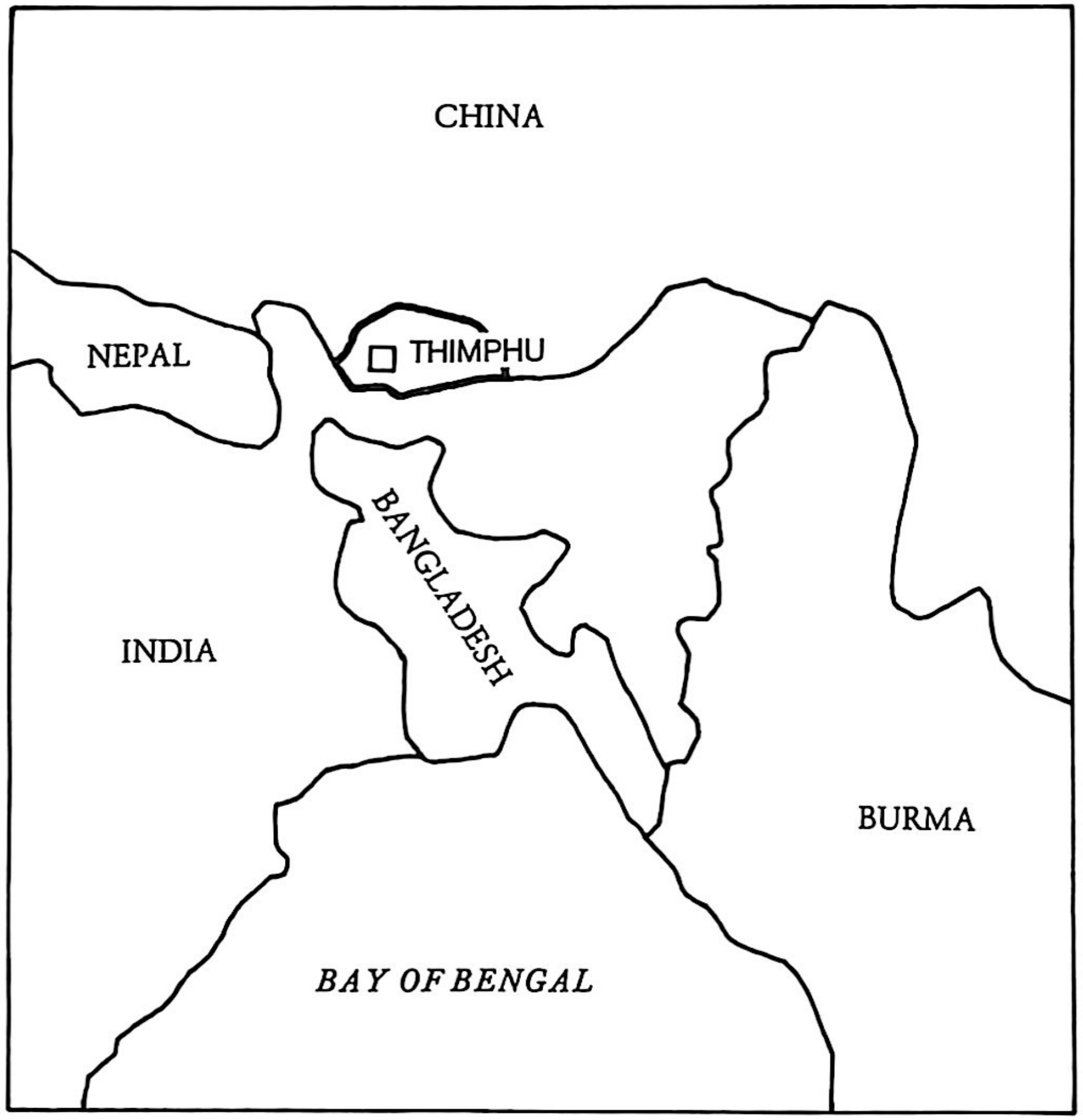
Development of sports is another new task of the Benin revolution. The endeavour to open new and to reconstruct already existing sports facilities is a modest one, but represents a significant advance in this field. The national sport is football.

Public health: In 1975 Benin had one doctor for every 32,760 inhabitants and one hospital bed for every 770 inhabitants.

Religion: 65% of the population practise traditional African cults, some 13% are Moslems, and the rest profess Christian creeds.

BHUTAN




CHINA
NEPAL
THIMPHU
BANGLADESH
INDIA
BURMA
BAY OF BENGAL

Official name: The Kingdom of Bhutan.
Area: 47,000 sq.km.
Borders: Bhutan is situated in Central Asia, in the valleys of the Eastern Himalayas at an altitutde of 2,500 m. It borders in the south and west on India, in the north and east on the People's Republic of China.
Population: 1,269,000 inhabitants (1979), 60% of whom are Tibetans, 20% Gurungs and 12% Assamese. The annual rate of population growth is 2.2%.
Capital: Thimphu (15,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Paro Dzong and Tashi Dzong.
Official language: Dzongkha.
Public holidays: August 2, Buddhist Lent; October 30, end of the Buddhist Lent; December 17, National Holiday; November 11, birthday of King Jigme Singye Wangchuk.
Geography: Bhutan is a mountainous country with river basins of the Manas, Amochu, Wang-Chu and Machu rivers, which descend from the north to the south towards the valley of the Brahmaputra in India. The terrain rises gradually into high, mountainous country until it reaches the permanently snow-covered peaks extending along the whole northern frontier. The highest peak is the Chomo Lhari (7,313 m).

54% of the country is covered with dense forests. However, there are also fertile valleys whose soil is suitable for farming. The warmest month is July with an average temperature of 17°C, the coldest is January which has the average temperature of 4°C. The average monthly rainfall is 250 mm.

Brief history: Bhutan is called by its inhabitants "The Land of the Dragon", and it is this mythological beast which is the country's symbol.

Primitive people of Mongolian origin (the Bhutavas) settled in the valleys of Bhutan only to be subjugated in the 9th century by the Tibetans, who, from then on, kept their hold on the territory, making their living by farming and livestock raising.

Bhutan remained isolated from the outside world for a long time because of its remoteness, its backward economy and the political caste system maintained by the Buddhist monks. It was thus only in 1865, when the British, extending their domination of India, entered Bhutan.

British domination of the country was completed in 1910 with the signing of a peace treaty whereby Bhutan recognized the influence of Great Britain in exchange for an annual subsidy.

In 1947, India won her independence and two years later Bhutan signed a treaty with the government in New Delhi, recognizing India's right to "provide guidance" to the Bhutan government. The treaty also gave the Bhutanese the right of free entry into India and established India's obligation to represent the Kingdom of Bhutan abroad.

In 1952, King Jigme Dorji Wangchuk assumed power and the post of Prime Minister was filled by his brother-in-law, Jigme Dorji. During his reign the absolutist character of the monarchy was modified and a 150-member Advisory Council (Tsogdu) was established.

When tension developed between India and China over Tibet in 1959, the government in New Delhi took charge of road construction in Bhutan and of the administration and formation of an army and a police force, in which a large number of Indian nationals were employed; it is estimated that some 55% of Bhutanese public administration officials are Indians.

Prime Minister Jigme Dorji was assassinated in 1964, and the King assumed his duties. Subsequently, two attempts to abolish the monarchy were frustrated. The measures adopted by the government included the liberation of slaves, the establishment of schools, a campaign to eliminate venereal diseases, and distribution of a large part of the royal lands.

In 1971, Bhutan was admitted to the United Nations and the next year, after twenty years on the throne, King Jigme Singye Wangchuk, who was crowned two years later at the age of seventeen as the fourth sovereign of the Wangchuk dynasty.

The neighbourhood of the People's Republic of China is troublesome for the small kingdom. At the end of 1979, Bhutan and India had to make a diplomatic protest to the government in Peking against constant violations and infiltrations of the frontier between the two countries by Chinese troops.

The special ties existing between Bhutan and India were re-affirmed by King Jigme Singye Wangchuk during his visit to New Delhi late in February 1980. He used that opportunity for stating that Bhutan found its relationship with India satisfactory and had no intention of modifying it.

Economy: Bhutan is an agricultural country with some cottage industry. Cultivable area of 558,478 hectares produces annually 290,000 tons of rice, 63,000 tons of wheat, 58,000 tons of maize and 40,000 tons of potatoes in addition to some other crops for local consumption. There are large tracts of forest land.

In 1978, Bhutan had 206,000 head of cattle, 40,000 sheep, 25,000 goats, 60,000 pigs, and 20,000 horses, most of them ponies. According to the latest available figures, Bhutan's Gross National Product (GNP) was approximately 130 million dollars in 1978 i.e., 100 dollars per capita.

The national budget for 1978-1979 was balanced and almost fully covered by financial aid from India, which is Bhutan's main commercial partner. In the course of Bhutan's fourth five-year plan, India covered 700 million rupees out of the total of 800 million rupees needed to finance its realization.

The two most important sources of foreign exchange for the country are tourism and philately. The latter brings to Bhutan annually some 60 million dollars.

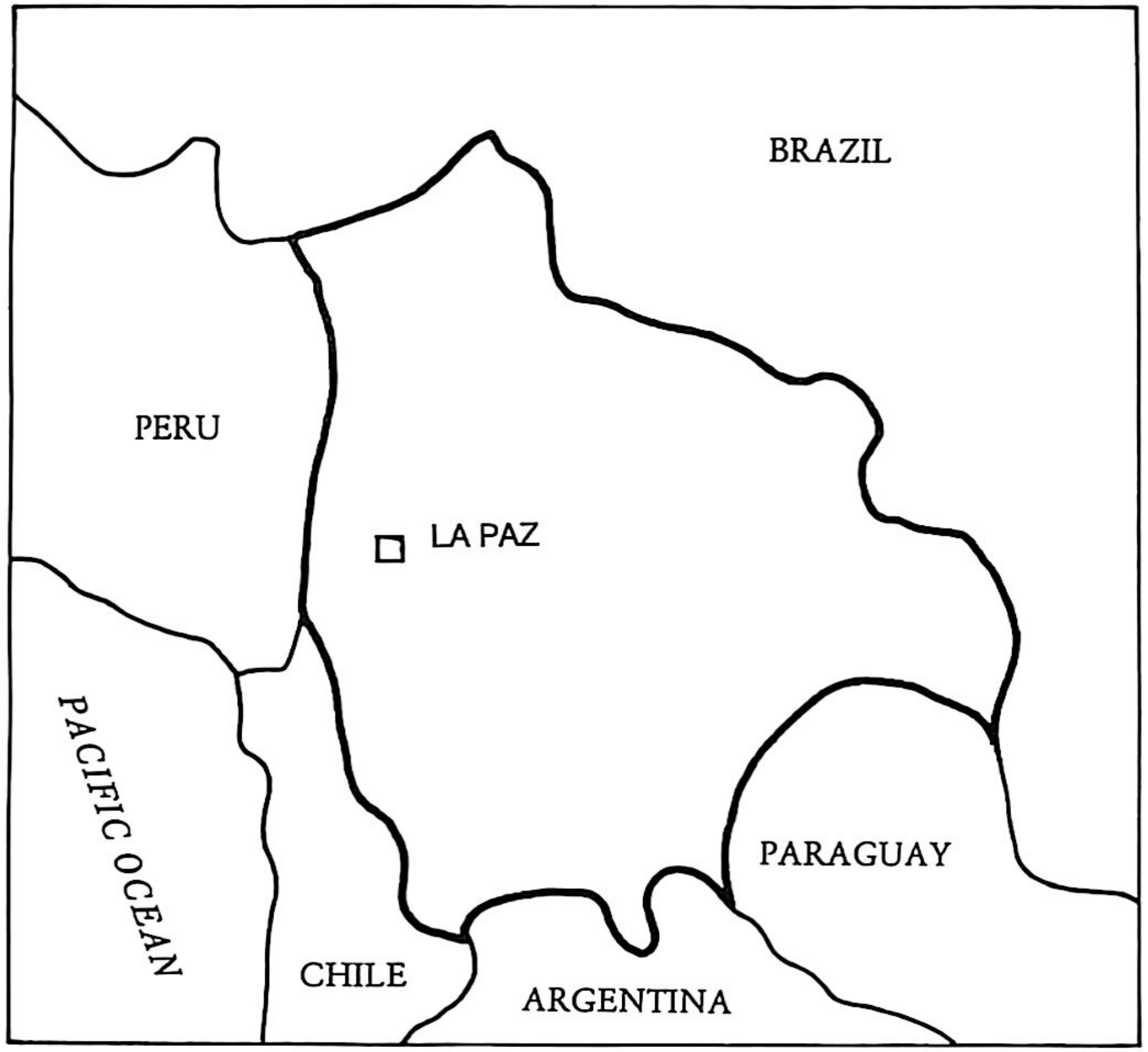
In 1977, the economically active population was 601,000, 94% of this number being employed in agriculture.

The national monetary unit is the ngultrum which has the same value as the Indian rupee. The rupee is also accepted as valid currency in Bhutan. The ngultrum was brought into circulation in 1974.

In the period 1976-1981, Bhutan implemented its fourth five-year plan, which provided for an expansion of agricultural production, production of electric power and timber production. In order to implement the plan, Bhutan received 12,250,000 dollars from the U.N. Development Programme.

Government: The system of government in Bhutan is a modified form of absolute monarchy with the King as the supreme authority. There is a Council of 150 members, 30 of whom are appointed by the King, 110 by the village authorities and 10 by representatives of the Buddhist Lamas. The native name of this Council is Tsongdu.
Armed forces: The army and the police force were formed by India and their personnel includes Indian nationals.
Organizations: There are no political parties in Bhutan.
Education: In 1978, there were 120 schools of different types in Bhutan with 20,839 students and 922 teachers. Some 200 Bhutanese are studying at universities in India and other countries in Asia, Europe and America.
Public health: There are 10 hospitals with a total of 526 beds, a mobile hospital and 52 doctors. In 1976, there was one doctor per 30,800 inhabitants.
Religion: 75% of the population are Mahayana Buddhists of the Drukpa Kagyu sect, which is the state religion. The rest profess Hinduism.

BOLIVIA


BRAZIL
PERU
LA PAZ
PACIFIC OCEAN
PARAGUAY
CHILE
ARGENTINA

Official name: The Republic of Bolivia.
Area: 1,098,581 sq.km.
Borders: In the north and east Bolivia borders on Brazil along a 3,125 km frontier, in the south on Paraguay and Argentina, and in the west on Peru.
Population: 5,950,000 inhabitants. In the period 1970-1978 the average annual rate of population growth was 2.2%. 80% of the population live in the Andean region at an altitude of more than 3,000 m. 54% of the population are Indians, 31.2% mestizos, and 14.8% white, mostly descendants of Spaniards. 1,000,000 of the Indian population speak Quechua, 660,000 Aymara, and 150,000 other Indian languages and dialects. 80% of the population live in rural areas.
Capital: La Paz.
Principal cities: Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, Potosi, Oruro, and Sucre.
Languages: Spanish is the official language, but also widely spoken are Aymara, Quechua and Guarani.
Public holidays: August 6, Independence Day (1825).
Geography: The Andes form the backbone of Bolivia and at the Puna de Atacama split into the ranges of the Cordillera Occidental and the Cordillera Oriental. Extending between these two ranges for a length of 700 km and a width of 500 km (200,000 sq.km) and at the average altitude of 3,500 m is the Altiplano—the high plateau. On the eastern slopes of the mountains are the *vungas*—the "hot regions"—and valleys, which link the Altiplano and the lowland plains. The plains are to be found in the northeast and east, principally in the regions of Santa Cruz, El Beni and Pando. The Bolivian Andes include some of America's highest peaks, such as Ancohuma (6,388 m), Illimani (6,426 m), Sakama (6,502 m), Sorata or Illampu (6,363 m), Caca—Aca (6,195 m), Condoriri (6,125 m), Cerro de Cruz (5,433 m), and Huayna Potosi (5,225 m). There are many volcanoes, some active, some extinct, such as Sakama.

Bolivia's principal river on the Altiplano is the Desaguadero, which connects Lakes Titicaca and Poopo and which is navigable over a stretch of 320 km. Other rivers belong to the Amazon watershed and empty into the Madeira River. They include the Abuna, 300 km of which form the frontier with Brazil, the Beni, 1,700 km long, the Mamore, which runs through the region of El Beni, the Madera or Madeira, formed by the confluence of the Beni and the Mamore, and the Guapore or Itenez, 1,6000 km long. Two rivers have their sources in Peru but run over long stretches through Bolivian territory. They are the Madre de Dios, 1,448 km long, and the Orton, 547 km long. The most important Bolivian rivers belonging to the Rio de la Plata watershed are the Paraguay, of which 2,500 km are navigable, the Tarija, 241 km long, the Pilcomayo, 1,609 km long, which has its source in the region of Oruro and forms a long stretch of the frontier between Paraguay and Argentina, and the Bermejo, 1,600 km long, which has its source in Tarija, forms a part of the Argentinian-Bolivian frontier, and empties into the Paraguay River.

Lake Titicaca with an area of 8,288 sq.km lies in the Altiplano at the height of 3,850 m. It is 209 km long and is the highest-lying lake in the world navigable for steamboats. There are many islands on the lake, two of them being of the greatest interest—the island of Coati, or Moon Island, which is famous because of its archaeological treasures, and Titicaca or Sun Island (11 km long and 7 km wide). from where came Manco Capac and Mama Ocllo, the founders of Tahuantinsuyo. The other major lake is Poopo, some 300 km southeast of Lake Titicaca and linked with it by the Desaguadero River. It has saline water a surface area of 2,500 sq. km, and lies at an altitude of 3,690 m. In the El Beni region are Lake Rogagua, from which runs the Rio Negro, and Lake Rogaguado, which is on the average 22 km wide and 52 km long.

Bolivia's climate greatly varies according to altitude. There are three climatic zones: the "hot lands" of the plains where the average temperature is 25°C, the "temperate lands" of the Andean valleys lying at altitudes ranging from 2,000 to 3,000 m, where the average temperature is 15°C, and the "cold lands" of the Altiplano, with the average temperature of 10°C. At the altitude of 4,000 m the climate is very cold and the permanent snow line is at 5,400 m. In the capital of La Paz the temperature ranges from -3.5°C in June to 24.5°C in November. East of the Cordillera Oriental it rains all year round. Otherwise the rainy season lasts from October to March. The summer months are November, December and January, while the winter months are June, July and August. The annual rainfall in La Paz is 610 mm.
Brief history: The first civilizations on the Altiplano of Bolivia date back to the year 2,000 B.C. The most important of them include those of Viscanchan in the Andean Paleolithic period, the Wankarani in the vicinity of Ururo, and the Chiripa near Lake Titicaca.

Of the pre-Inca cultures mention should be made of the Tiwanacu or Tiahuanaco culture,which is viewed as one of the major civilizations and had several stages.

The Collas, a people who inhabited the Altiplano, seem to have had their origin on one of the islands on Lake Titicaca. They formed a civilization in the full meaning of the term. Originally they inhabited areas close to the large lake, but subsequently spread to the watersheds of the Amazon and the Rio de la Plata, mixing with other ethnic groups. Still later, they reached Venezuela in the north and Argentina in the south. Expressions of the still spoken ancient Aymara language indicate the achievements of that civilisation which may be divided into two periods—that of the Collas proper, which was an era of great flourishment, and the Aymara civilization which inherited the Colla institutions in the religious, agrarian, social and political spheres.

The Collas achieved major progress in farming, in hydrology, ceramics, metallurgy (where they re-discovered bronze), and in particular in architecture and sculpture. Their city of Tiwanacu or Tiahuanaco was carefully planned and astronomically turned towards the east.

At the beginning of the 10th century the Quechuas from Cuzco invaded Collasuyo and the Inca Mayta Capac seized Tiahuanaco around the year 1200. Subsequently, the Incas Sinchi Roca and Capac Yupanqui completed the conquest of Bolivian territory. However, the country of the Collas continued to exist under Inca domination until the arrival of the Spanish.

Diego de Almagro,who was appointed governor of the territories south of Peru in 1535, organized an expedition to Chile during which he passed through Bolivian territory. There he founded the town of Paria near present-day Oruo. His lieutenant, Juan de Saavadra, surveyed a part of today's Bolivia without running into any serious resistance from the Indians.

On Bolivian territory the Spanish met with the Inca civilization which extended from the Angasmayo River in Colombia to the Maule River in Chile, and from the Pacific coast to the farthest reaches of the Andes.

The Tahuantinsuyo realm had a population of twelve million and its economy was founded on collective cultivation of the land. It was founded in 1054 A.D. by Manco Capac, who was succeeded by thirteen Incas, i.e., lords, over a span of half a millennium, and yet the empire did not lose its unity or power either in the west or on the high plateaus.

The vast Inca empire covered today's Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, northern Chile and Northern Argentina. It came to its end on August 29, 1533, with the execution of the Inca Atahualpa in Cajamarca.

It is said that with the silver they had extracted from Potosi, the Spanish could have built a bridge between Europe and America.

In Bolivia, the Spanish conquerors retained from the highly organized Inca empire only those authoritarian features, which enabled them to enslave labour, and thus blocked the development of a culture rationally structured for agricultural production. The colonial system divided the population into three castes: (a) the peasants, called "Indians", (b) the miners, workers from the large estates, military recruits, and the urban proletariat, all of whom were called "cholos", i.e., half-breeds, and (c) the landlords, merchants professionals, students and officials, who called themselves "whites".

The population demonstrated its resistance to the colonial oppression in a number of uprisings, such as those led by Antonio Gallardo in La Paz in 1661, by Alejo Calatayud in Cochabamba in 1730, and Juan Velez de Cordoba in Oruro in 1739. All three men were Creoles who paid with their lives for their love of liberty. Native uprisings also took place in Potosi, La Paz and Cuzco in 1780 and 1781.

The struggle for independence gained in intensity between 1809 and 1825: under the leadership of the Zudanez brothers in Characas on May 25, 1809, of Pedro Domingo Murillo in La Paz on July 16, of the same year, and then in Cochabamba on September 14, 1810, under the leadership of Sebastian Arce.

These eruptions of unrest were followed by a guerilla war fought in Upper Peru from 1812 to 1824. As early as in the period 1824—1825, the struggle against Spain was joined by the regular armies of Simon Bolivar and Antonio Jose de Sucre, and on August 6, 1825, the Republic of Bolivia came into being, taking its name from the Great Liberator.

When Bolivia gained its independence, it did so with a large territory, approximately twice its present size, on the basis of the Royal Audience of Charcas, but its population just exceeded one million. This placed it in an extremely weak position,which eventually caused the loss of half of its territory.

A camarilla of mine owners (Patino, Aramayo, Hochschild and others), politicians and generals from the local oligarchy ran the republic as a part of the tin business. The interests of British imperialism first in the saltpetre of Antofagasta and later in the petroleum resources of the south provoked two fratricidal wars in South America--the Pacific War waged by Chile against Bolivia and Peru (1879-1883), and the Chaco War between Paraguay and Bolivia (1932-1935). In the former Bolivia lost its ocean coast and in the latter three quarters of its Chaco territory. Cession to Brazil in 1904 of the Amazonian Acre completed the dismemberment of the country.

The feeling of national frustration caused by these losses gave rise to a strong reformist and anit-imperialist sentiment. The Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) emerged together with a trade-union and peasant left. After a number of uprisings and an electoral victory which was not respected, the MNR led in 1952 a popular insurrection which defeated in street battles seven regiments of regular troops and placed at the head of the country President Victor Paz Estensoro. The Bolivian revolution nationalized the tin mines, adopted an agrarian reform and instituted universal suffrage. In order to prevent the return to power of the old oligarchy, the army was re-organized and workers' and peasants' militias were formed.

Weakened by imperialist pressures and by internal divisions, the revolution became deformed, and U.S. influence in Bolivian economy and politics gradually re-established itself. Paz Estensoro was overthrown in 1964.

In 1967 a guerilla war was launched, organized and led by Ernesto Che Guevara, which by its revolutionary zeal under extremely difficult conditions stirred up the very foundations of Bolivian society. Since then the crisis within the political organizations and parties began to manifest itself in many forms in the sense that their members began to question the traditional concepts regarding the country's major problems.

The revolutionary mood of the Bolivian people was reflected in the government of General Juan Jose Torres (1970-1971), which was broken up by a brutal coup led by General Hugo Banzer Suarez,who, in turn, was deposed by another military coup staged on July 21, 1978, by General Juan Pereda Asbun, following elections won by a centre-left coalition led by Hernan Siles Suazo. On November 24, 1978, the armed forces deposed Pereda Asbun and the presidency was assumed by General David Padilla Arencibia.

In November 1979, elections were held, in which none of the competing candidates—Heran Siles Suazo of the Popular Democratic Union (UDP) and Victor Paz Estensoro of the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR)—obtained the required majority. The legislature elected as President Walter Guevara Arce for a term of one year during which he was to call general elections, as stipulated by the constitution. However, on November 1, 1979, a military putsch led by Colonel Alberto Natusch Busch, overthrew Guevara Arce.

From the very beginning, the new regime was opposed by broad sectors of the population and Natusch had to reach agreement with Lidia Gueiler, the Chairwoman of the dissolved the Senate, who assumed the presidential office on November 16 of the same year.

New elections were held on June 29, 1980, which were won by Hernan Siles Suazo, the candidate of the left-of-centre UDP. However, because he did not win an absolute majority, the final verdict about the election results was left to the Congress. On July17, 1980, the 6th Army Division and Naval Command No.2 mutinied and overthrew the government headed by Lidia Gueiler. A military junta was formed, led by General Luis Garcia Meza. Some of its members were known to be involved in drug trafficking, for which, according to some U.S. sources, Bolivia annually gets 1,500,000,000 dollars. This is more than it earns from its legitimate exports.

After two unsuccessful attempts to topple President Garcia Meza, General Alberto Natusch Busch carried out a new military coup on August 4, 1981, and set up a military junta to rule the country. On September 3, the military signed a compromise under which General Celso Torrelio Villa was appointed Bolivia's new President.

In the course of its 156 years of independence, Bolivia has had 58 military regimes, 32 civilian governments, and 378 revolutions, uprisings and coups.

Economy: Bolivia's 1978 GNP amounted to 2,331,100,000 dollars. Its annual growth rate has been 5.2% and 3% in per capita terms. The economic crisis plaguing the country intensified in the 1970s and in the first years of the current decade, due to the seven years of the Banzer dictatorship,which wasted away a large amount of the revenues produced by an international economic boom especially favourable for Bolivia, and which led the country into economic decline.

The mining industry has been declining since 1976, just as petroleum extraction which in the period 1974-1976 produced 42,185 barrels a day, but in 1978 only 32,000. The same was true of agricultural production. The economic development plan for the period 1976-1980 set as the main objectives and increase in the per capita growth of the gross national product, an increase and diversification of the country's exports, and a gradual and selective substitution of imports. However, the plan could not be implemented because of the political instability prevailing in the country, and the disproportion between imports and exports not only continued but has actually grown in recent years. Petroleum and tin are Bolivia's principal resources, but both reflect Bolivia's general crisis.

The Bolivian economy is based on the export of primary commodities and the import of manufactured goods. The military regime is mismanaging and wasting away the country's resources and is flooding it with imported goods. Sales of natural gas to Argentina for 2.30 dollars per cu.m as against the world price of 5.40 dollars, are a concession to the neighbouring country for its support of the coup staged by Garcia Meza. The price of tin has dropped because of sales of this metal from U.S. strategic stockpiles.

Government: According to the Bolivian constitution, executive power is exercised by the President of the Republic who is elected together with the Vice-President for a term of four years. He must be at least 25 years old. The President appoints a cabinet of fifteen ministers and a Minister-Secretary General of the Presidency, who heads the Secretariat of Information. The legislature has two chambers. Its upper chamber, the Senate, has 27 members, three from each administrative department. They must be at least thirty years old and are elected for a term of six years. One-third of the Senate membership is elected every two years.

Judicial power is exercised by the Supreme Court consisting of ten justices who must be older than thirty-five years and are appointed for a term of ten years, district courts and other tribunals and courts.

The right to vote belongs to all citizens—men and women—over the age of twenty-one years. Married citizens acquire the right to vote at the age of eighteen years.

The seat of government is the capital, La Paz, where reside the executive and the legislative branches of government. The constitutional capital is Sucre,which is the seat of the Supreme Court. The country is divided administratively into nine regions: Beni, Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, La Pax, Oruro, Pando, Potosi, Santa Cruz and Tarija.

Organisations: The Bolivian Workers' Central (COB) is the most powerful trade union organization in the country together with the strong Miners' Federation. There is a large number of political organizations in the country, of which the main ones are Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) of General Banzer, the Alliance for National Integration (APIN), the Social-Democratic Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), the Tupac Katari Movement (MITKA), which associates the Quechua and Aymara-speaking sectors of the population, Siles Suazo's Historical National Revolutionary Movement (MNRI). the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCML), the Revolutionary Workers' Party, the Bolivian Section of the Fourth International, Guevara Arce's Authentic Revolutionary Party (PRA), the Nationalist Revolutionary Party of the Left (PRIN), which is headed by the workers' leader Juan Lechin Oquendo, the Socialist Party-1 (PS-1) of Marcelo Quiroga Santa Cruz, the Bolivian Unity Party (PUB), and the Workers' Vanguard (VO), Mention should also be made of the MNR Alliance, an electoral front made up of the MNRH, the PDC, the PCML, and the PRA, as well as of the Popular Democratic Union (UDP), another electoral alliance, consisting of the MNRI, the PCB, and the MIR

Armed forces: The Bolivian army is considered to be one of the most corrupt in the world as far as its command is concerned. The constant readiness of that army to stage coups has brought about a situation where the military putschists, who in the past had simply been used to guard and assert the interests of the local oligarchy, today have become a part of those interests and of subservience to colonialism.

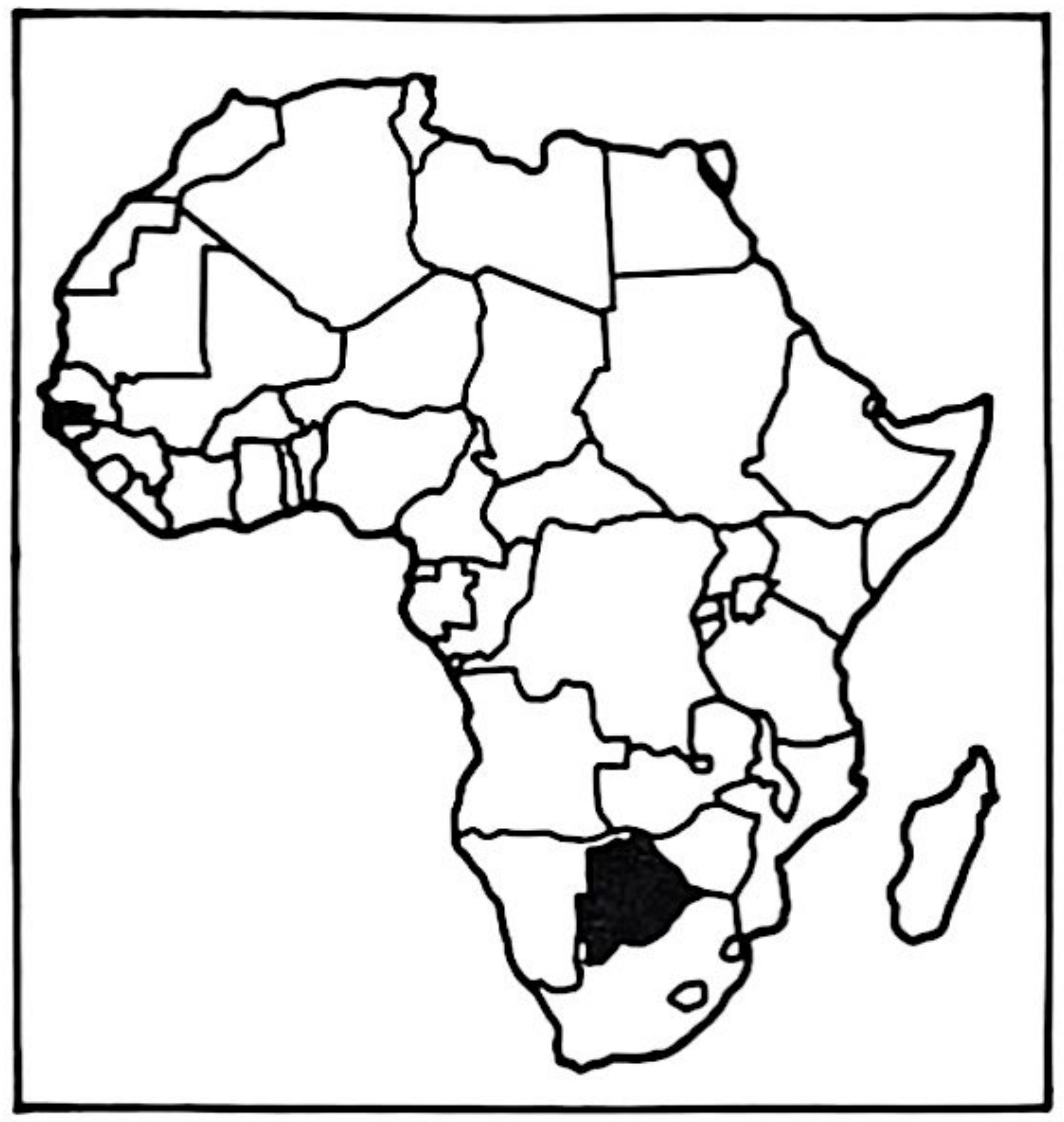
The situation was characterized by the politician Hernan Siles Suazo after the military coup of July 1980, when he said: "The contempt for the popular vote, the crimes committed as a part of their repressive services, the corruption generated by their involvement in the traffic in drugs and smuggling, their participation in deals ruinous for the country, and the coups they have carried out to impede the democratic process have created not a breach but an abyss between the armed forces and the people."

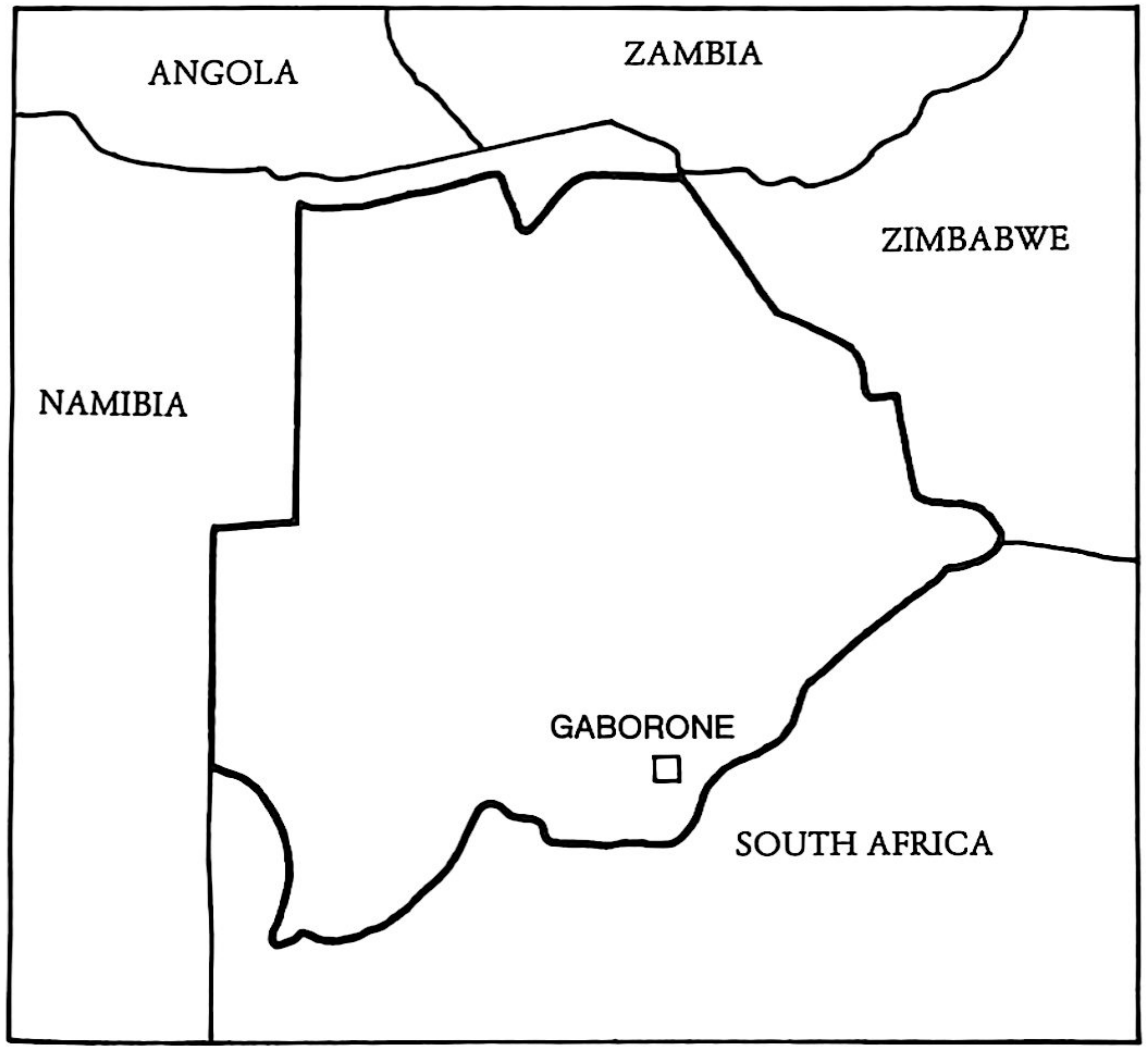
Education: For a country so rich in tin, which constitutes the basis of its economy, Bolivia has an alarming rate of illiteracy—almost 60% of the population, in particular the indigenous one. Only 22% of the population have attended school.

Public health: In Bolivia there is one doctor for every 2,127 inhabitants and life expectancy is barely 46 years. Only a small part of the national budget is spent on public health, for which reason the infant mortality rate is 77.3 per one thousand live-born infants.

Religion: Separation of the church from the state was decreed in 1961. The population is almost entirely Roman Catholics (approximately 94%). Formally, there is freedom of religion in the country. In recent years, there has been an increase in the number of individuals professing Protestant creeds. It is estimated that roughly 3% of the population are Protestants.

BOTSWANA




ANGOLA
ZAMBIA
ZIMBABWE
NAMIBIA
GABORONE
SOUTH AFRICA

Official name: The Republic of Botswana.
Area: 600,372 sq.km.
Borders: To the north Botswana borders on Namibia (the Caprivi region) and Zambia, to the east on Zimbabwe to the south on the Republic of South Africa, and to the west on Namibia.
Population: 726,000 inhabitants in 1978. Population density is one inhabitant per sq.km and the annual rate of population grwoth was 3.4% in the period 1970-1974. The main ethnic groups are the Bamangwato, who form almost one-third of the total population, the Bakgatla, the Bamalete, the Batawana, the Bakwena, and the Bangwaketse.
Capital: Gaborone (37,000 inhabitants in 1977).
Principal cities: Francistown, Serowe, Kanye, Selebi-Pikwe, Molepolole
Languages: English and Setswana are the official languages.
Public holidays: September 30, Independence Day (1966).
Geography: Botswana covers a vast, landlocked area located between the Molopo River in the south and the Chobe River, a tributary of the Zambezi River, in the north. It is sparsely populated—one inhabitant per sq.km—and most of it consists of vast expanses of desert. The central, western and southern regions form the Kalahari Desert.

Except for the Okango and Chobe Rivers in the north and west respectively, and the Mariko and Limpopo in the east, other rivers have water only during a single period in the year. Woods are scanty with the exception of a large area along the banks of the Chobe. Rainfall is intermittent between December and April. In the north, tropical conditions partly prevail. The climate is hot and dry.

Brief history: The Batswana tribes which settled in the present-day area of Botswana and in the north of South Africa's Cape Province early in the 19th century owe their territorial limits and their ethnic make-up to two important historical factors—the wars which accompanied the expansion of the Zulu kingdom and which changed the ethnic configuration of all southern and eastern Africa, and the expanding activities of white missionaries, traders and colonists, the vanguard of the colonization process.

The most important chief of all the Batswana, Khama I from the Bamangwato tribe, became a Christian, succeeded in rallying his tribe under missionary protection, and forced the Ndebele tribes to withdraw to the north. He is usually presented as an able chief who knew how to make use of the agents of colonial expansion for ensuring the survival of his realm even though under British "protection". This protection was not an act of goodwill on the part of the British government, but an indirect form of controlling that "Suez Canal to the north", the famous words used by Cecil Rhodes at the time when he thought of forming a vast area of British influence running from the Cape to Cairo.

Faced by Boer rivalry, London decided to "neutralize" the territory and turn it into the Protectorate of Bechuanaland in 1885, after it had annexed its southern part and joined it to Cape Province. Although Great Britain had always insisted on her "loyalty" to the Tswana tribal chiefs, the fact that the capital of the protectorate had been, until one year before independence, the town of Mafeking in South African territory, clearly indicates Bechuanaland's dependence on the Anglo-Boer minority which alone really enjoyed the protection of British imperialism.

In 1958, the colonial adminstration approved the formation of a Legislative Council. The first elections were held in 1961, under a system which gave the 3,200 whites living in the protectorate ten seats on the Legislative Council, while the 317,000 Africans elected the other ten members, but indirectly. No native political party ran in the elections.

In 1960, the first truly nationalist party of present-day Botswana was founded—the Bechuanaland People's Party led by K.T. Motsete and Motsamai Mpho. In January 1962, Seretse Khama, a descendant of Khama I, founded the moderate Bechuanaland Democratic Party, which enjoyed the support of the largest tribe, the Bamangwato, and of the liberal wing of the white colonists. Khama had been elected to the protectorate's Executive Council in 1961, and from that position could subsequently build his party into the country's major political force. In the pre-independence elections in 1965, Khama's party made large gains and its leader became Prime Minister of the autonomous government. On September 30, 1966, Sir Seretse Khama became Head of State of the since then independent Republic of Botswana.

In spite of his strong dependence on South Africa, Khama made Botswana play an important role in the process of decolonialization of southern Africa. As a member of the front-line states since their emergence in the 1970s, Botswana defied the Pretoria regime and joined the governments which resolutely rejected the system of apartheid and supported the national liberation forces. It should not be forgotten that since independence Botswana has been chronically indebted to South Africa and that all of the country's foreign trade must pass through South African ports.

The victory of the nationalist forces in Zimbabwe in 1980 should provide a vital opening for Botswana to independent Africa. The return of the thousands of refugees from Zimbabwe in 1980 should provide a vital opening for Botswana to independent Africa. The return of the thousands of refugees from Zimbabwe, who had found shelter in Botswana, lifted a considerable burden off the shoulders of the Gaborone government in all fields.

Suffering from a grave illness, the first President of Botswana died in the capital of his country on July 13, 1980, at the age of 56, in spite of an operation performed in London. The continuity of his policies will obviously be secured by his successor, Vice-President Quett Masire, who also held the post of Minister of Finance and Development and who had helped found Khama's party in 1962. Five days after Khama's death, Masire was elected to the presidency by the National Assembly by 34 votes against 2.

Khama's anti-racist and anti-tribalist line, which Masire has pledged to continue following, will face the hard reality of the serious problems plaguing the country—tribal conflicts, nepotism and regionalism, which have re-emerged with renewed strength after the last general elections.

In 1977, the increased tension in the whole area and the aggressive moves of the Ian Smith regime in Southern Rhodesia made Khama form a national army. His son, Ian Khama, 27 years old and a graduate of the British military academy at Sandhurst, was then appointed commander-in-chief of the new army. Now, Ian Khama, who on the death of his father became the traditional chief of the Bamangwato, has publicly expressed his support for Masire, who belongs to a minority ethnic group.

Economy: Botswana's economy is agricultural in character and farming is pursued on 512,000 hectares out of the total arable area of 58,537,000 hectares by 87% of the economically active population, which was estimated at 328,200 persons in 1975. In 1980, 60,000 workers were employed in the mines of South Africa and their wages contributed some 55 million dollars to Botswana's economy in 1976, i.e., one quarter of the GNP. The main agricultural products include sorghum, maize, millet and peanuts. 739,000 cu.m of timber were produced in 1975. The livestock sector included in 1976, 2,600,000 head of cattle -from which 30,000 tons of meat and 3,000 tons of hides were obtained—425,000 sheep, and one million goats. The important mining industry produced 288,000 tons of soft coal in 1977, 2,450,000 metric carats of diamonds in 1976 (Botswana is the world's fifth largest producer of diamonds), exploited by the South African corporation De Beers Consolidated Mines, 600 tons of copper, 340 tons of manganese, and 13,200 tons of nickel (in 1975), also controlled by South Africa.

Local industry is mostly light and mainly produces frozen and tinned meat, processed hides, and textiles. In 1972, 32 million kWh of electricity were produced. Botswana is the first African country processing meat for the South African market and for the European Economic Community.

According to the last available data, Botswana's GNP amounted to 220 million dollars in 1974. The national budget for the fiscal year 1974-1975 was balanced at 85 million dollars, while the balance of trade in the previous fiscal year showed a deficit of 65 million dollars. The national currency has been the pula since 1976, and it is tied to the South African rand. According to World Bank figures, Botswana's foreign debt was 144,200,000 dollars in 1975.

Government: Botswana is a republic and its supreme authority is the President. It has a National Assembly of 32 members elected by universal suffrage. There is also a House of Tribal Chiefs made up of the eight chiefs of the principal tribes and 7 elected members who have a consultative status. Botswana is a member of the Commonwealth and of the United Nations.

Armed forces: Until recently, there was only a small, paramilitary mobile police unit. In April 1976, the Botswana Defence Force came into being, made up of 300 men, about 140 of them charged with guard duty along the country's frontier with the former Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). Due to provocations instigated by the now defunct regime of Ian Smith, Botswana had to expand its military organization.

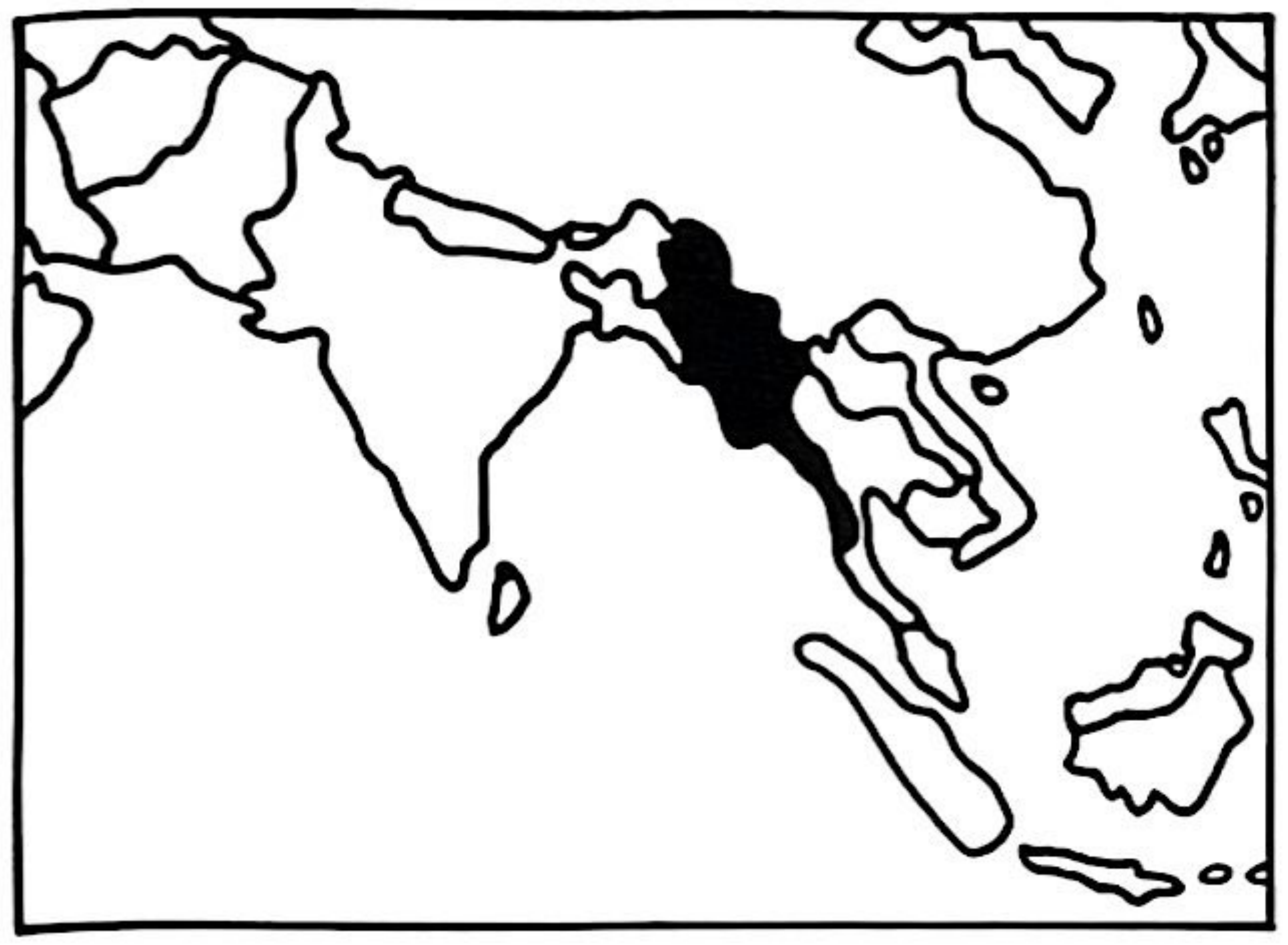
Organizations: There are the following political parties: the Botswana Democratic Party, which is the governing party and which was founded by Seretse Khama in 1962, the Botswana Independence Party, led by Motsamai Moho and having its stronghold in the northwest, the Botswana People's Party of Philip Matante, which is strong in Francistown, and the Botswana National Front, founded by Kenneth Koma in 1965 in order to unite the country's political left.

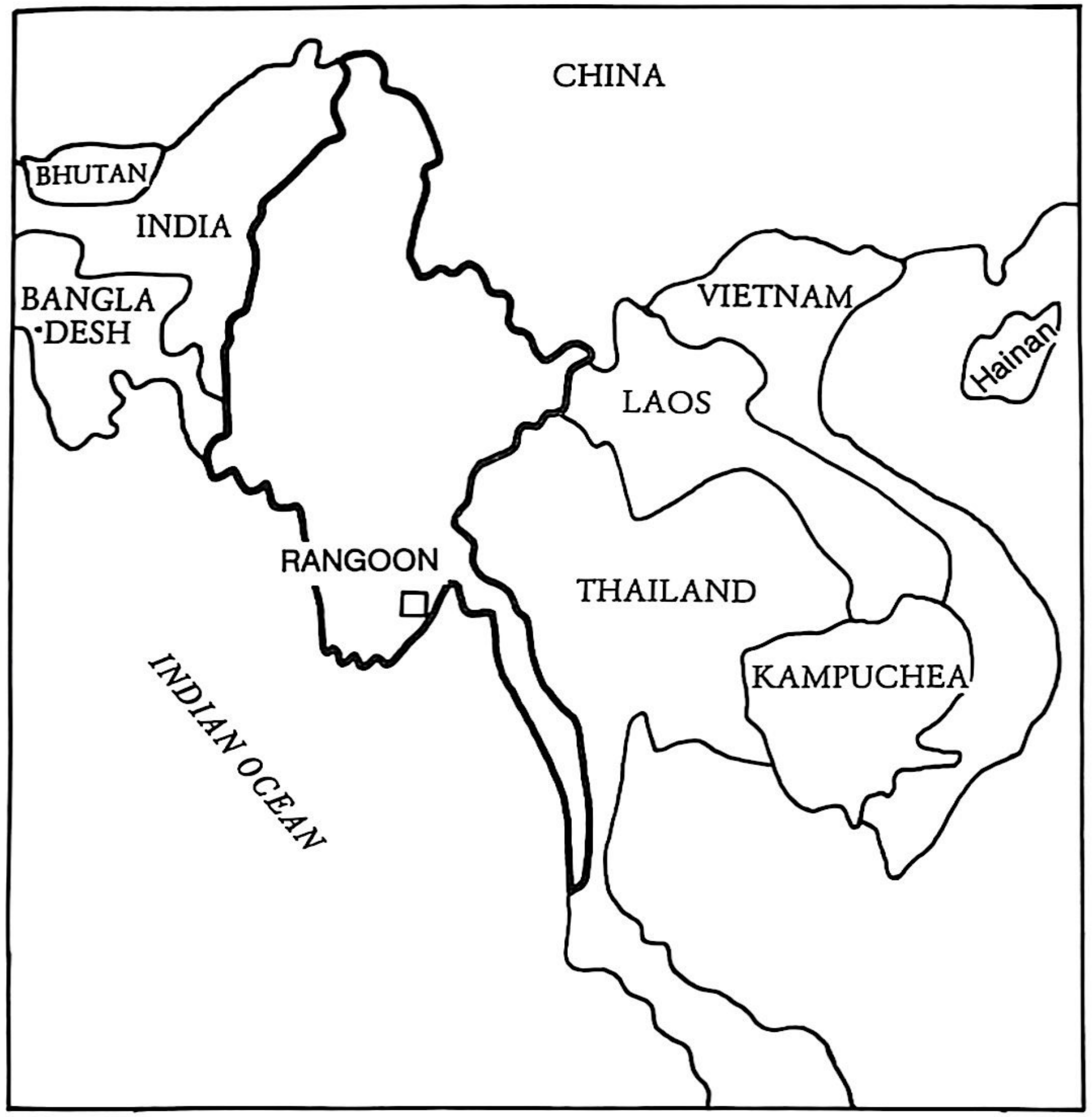
Education: In 1977, Botswana had 349 primary schools attended by 137,000 pupils, 32 secondary schools with 16,059 students, and three teachers' training schools with 646 students. Botswana established its own university in 1976 (its enrolment in 1977 was 520 students), cutting ties with the Centre of Higher Study in Maseru, Lesotho, which wants to serve that country, Swaziland and Botswana.

Public health: According to 1975 figures, Botswana had 1,660 hospital beds, 72 doctors, 6 dentists, and 277 nurses.

Religion: The majority of the population professes traditional cults, but there are about 144,500 Christians, both Roman Catholics and Protestants. There are also many members of syncretic churches and cults.

BURMA





Official name: The Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma.
Area: 676,552 km.
Borders: In the northwest Burma borders on India and Bangladesh, in the northeast on China and Laos, in the southeast on Thailand, and in the west is the Bay of Bengal.
Population: 32,573,000 inhabitants in 1979. The annual rate of population growth in the period 1977-1978 was 2.2%.
Capital: Rangoon (2,056,118 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Mandalay, Moulmein and Bassein.
Languages: Burmese is the official language. In the mountainous areas the common languages are those of the Shan, Karen and other ethnic minorities.
Public holidays: January 4, Independence Day.
Geography: Three distinct geographical regions are to be found on the territory covered by Burma. One of them is the western system of mountain ranges, which forms a large crescent arching from the Kukway Valley to Cape Negrais. This group of mountains is best known for the Paktai, Naga, Chin and Arakan Yoma peaks, but there are other elevations rising up to 3,650 m above sea level, and it forms a natural barrier between Burma and the Indian subcontinent.

The second region consists of the eastern chain of mountains,which begins as a continuation of the mountains of Yunan across the Sino-Burmese frontier in the northeastern corner of Kachin State, continues through the mountain ranges of Shan and Karenni, until it forms the natural division between Tenasserin and peninsular Thailand. In the north, where the eastern and western mountain systems link up, the average elevation is 1,800 m, but a number of peaks rise up to 3,000 m.

Lying between the two mountain systems is the country's third natural geographical region known as Central Burma. It is made up of extensive alluvial plains of great fertility, which are also the country's economic and cultural heartland. Running as an artery through the lowlands from the north to the south is the Irrawady River (2,172 km).

The climate is tropical and is affected by the monsoons. There are three distinct seasons: cool and dry from November to February, hot and dry from March to May, and hot and rainy from June to October. The average annual temperature is 27°C and rainfall varies from the annual average of 60 mm in some areas to 253 mm in others.

Brief history: According to the oldest known historical sources, Burmese territory was inhabited 2,000 years ago by different peoples of primitive social organization, which in successive migratory waves crossed the mountain chains separating them from their neighbours. Thus, Burma's territory was settled by the Pyus, the Mons, the Shans, the Karens, the Chins, and the Kachins. The country's present majority of inhabitants, the Burmese, who account for the 60% of the total population, arrived from the Tibetan highlands in the 9th century and occupied the basin of the Irrawady River, abandoning the mountains to their predecessors.

In the course of four centuries the Burmese created a flourishing civilization,which was influenced by Indian culture both in its script and in architecture, and which had a centralized monarchist government with a seat in Pagan.

At the end of the 13th century the Mongol armies overran the country and destroyed its cities. In the centuries which followed, the Shans reached the point where they could have established their dominion over the entire country, but were prevented from doing so by internal rivalries. The Burmese re-asserted their rule in the 16th century and established the Toungore dynasty which lasted from 1531 to 1752.

Europeans began to appear on the Burmese coast from the 15th century, dislocating the Indians and the Arabs who then dominated the trade with Burma. The first to reach Burma were the Venetian merchants,who were followed by the Portuguese, the English and the French, all of whom vied for domination of the territory. In the end, the Burmese, who had successfully repelled four attempts by the Chinese to invade their country, succumbed to British military might.

Great Britain fought three wars to colonize Burma. The first one was launched in 1824 and the last one ended in 1856 with the deportation to India of the last Burmese king, Thibaw, and with the institution of a British colonial government in Rangoon, which was subordinated to the British government in India.

However, the Burmese never accepted British rule and never ceased fighting it. The first popular movement against colonial domination was organized before World War I in the form of the Young Men's Buddhist Association.

Subsequently this organization was transformed into the General Council of Burmese Associations, which headed the nationalist movement. The political unrest among the Burmese population made the British introduce governmental reforms and a system called "diarchy", which included a partially elected legislative council whereby the colonialists tried in vain to create among the Burmese the illusion that they participated in the government of their country.

The impact of the worldwide economic crisis caused the Burmese peasantry to rise up in arms in what became known as the "Saya San rebellion". This insurrection was the first Burmese attempt in the 20th century to expel the British by force.

Burmese intellectuals and university students grouped themselves under the name of Thakins in the attempt to revive popular interest in the national language, traditions, identity and culture.

In 1937, the British separated the colonial administration of Burma from that of India, drew up a constitution for Burma, and organized a native government with an elected legislative assembly.

In 1942 Japanese troops occupied Burma and tried to exploit the independence sentiments of the population for their benefit. Attracted by the Japanese promises, a group of Thakin youth, led by Aun San, underwent military training and formed the first nucleus of a National Burmese Army to fight together with the Japanese armies against the British-Indian forces and their allies from Chiang Kai-shek's China. Japan granted nominal independence to Burma in August 1943, and imposed a puppet governor as head of state.

Faced by the reality of a new colonial domination, this time Japanese, Aun San launched a guerilla war against the occupiers in 1944, and in order to unify all the patriotic forces created the Anti-fascist League of People's Liberty. When Japan was defeated in 1945, the British returned with the intention of re-establishing their colonial rule. In view of this situation, Aun San once again urged the people to wage the struggle for national liberation, and the British government therefore agreed on limited self-determination. Elections were held in April 1945 and were resoundingly won by the Anti-fascist League.

Two years later, Aun San was assassinated by reactionary national and international forces. His office of Prime Minister was assumed by U Nu. The assassination produced such popular indignation, that the British government was forced to recognize Burma's right to independence. Burma was then constituted as an independent federal state on January 4, 1948.

However, a few months later, a civil war broke out as a result of activities by reactionary forces supported from abroad, separatist demands raised by feudal elements in the non-Burmese minorities, and divisions within the progressive forces.

Another disturbing factor was added in 1950 with the entry into Burma of close to two thousand soldiers of Chiang Kia-shek's defeated armies, who did not recognize the authority of the Burmese government and settled down in unpopulated and inaccessible areas,where they dedicated themselves to the cultivation of the poppy and production of opium which they sold by way of Thailand.

Until 1958 Burma maintained a British-type parliamentary system of government, trying to deal with the problems raised by the civil war and internal political battles. In that year, in the face of an acute crisis provoked by a split in the ruling party, the Anti-fascist League for the Liberation of the People, the army chief-of-staff, General Ne Win, took charge of the government until 1960, when he held elections. In those elections U Nu once again won at the head of the Union Party, and returned to the office of Prime Minister.

Nevertheless, the economic and political situation of the country was not greatly improved and in March 1962, General Ne Win seized power once more. He set up a Revolutionary Council under his direction, which assumed all the functions of the government, suspended the constitution, and dissolved the parliament as well as the legislative and administrative councils of the autonomous states. In a declaration, the Revolutionary Council outlined what it called the Burmese road to socialism and announced the nationalization of the key sectors of the national economy and other reforms.

In the course of the subsequent decade the new government endeavoured to implement its programme of non-capitalist development by nationalizing large industrial enterprises, the banks, foreign companies, foreign and domestic trade, as well as transport and communications. In its external relations the Revolutionary Council pursued an anti-colonialist, anti-imperialist and non-aligned policy.

In 1971, the first congress was held in Rangoon of the Burmese Socialist Programme Party which Ne Win had formed as the sole ruling party. Two years later, a new constitution was drawn up and approved by popular referendum, under which the life of the country was institutionalized and Burma was given its present official name. In 1974, Ne Win was elected President of the State Council established under the new constitution.

In the course of 1974 and the beginning of 1975, the government's security forces achieved some success in suppressing a number of insurgent minority groups, but in the same period the government had to cope with serious problems caused by groups of insurgents financially and militarily assisted by China (the "White Banner" Communist Party of Burma and the Shan State Army), which problems persist to this day. In addition, in 1975 and 1976, the principal cities became the scene of student unrest and popular protests against the difficulties and shortages caused by administrative mismanagement, corruption wthin the ruling party and repressive methods.

This situation forced the party leadership to initiate a purge of its ranks. Thus, in 1976, 50,000 party members were expelled and the next year, on the occasion of the party's third congress, 17,894 members and 131,490 candidates for membership were expelled, while only 180 members of the party's central committee were re-elected.

Nevertheless, the very next year it was necessary to convene a special party congress in order to elect a new central committee in which 131 members elected the year before were replaced.

Besides purging the party ranks, the third congress also approved a new economic policy and scapped the four-year economic development plan then in effect.

General elections were held in Burma in 1978 and Ne Win was re-elected for another term of four years. The mass exodus of more than 200,000 Moslems from the state of Arakan into Bangladesh was another event which attracted the attention of the international press that year. Rapid diplomatic action by the Ne Win government prevented the incident from affecting Burma's relations with Bangladesh and succeeded in accomplishing the return of some 150,000 of the refugees. The talks initiated with the Dacca government in June also provided the opportunity for an exchange of opinion with the view to signing a land and maritime frontier agreement between the two countries.

At the Sixth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Havana in 1979, the Burmese Foreign Minister expressed his government's decision to withdraw from the non-aligned movement. This decision was confirmed some days later in Rangoon—on October 8, 1979—by General San Yu, Secretary of the State Council, in spite of interventions by many prestigious members of the non-aligned movement both at and after the Havana conference. This Burmese withdrawal will enter into effect or not at the 1982 summit conference. Burmese circles have attributed the decision to abandon the non-aligned movement to pressure by China,whose supporters control important areas in the north of the country.

In 1980, Ne Win toured a number of Asian capitals, including Peking where he tried without results to obtain from the Chinese leaders a promise to stop their aid to subversive groups which for many years have been waging guerilla war against the government in Rangoon.

In Tokyo, Ne Win succeeded in getting 2,373,000,000 yen in development assistance for his country. The members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—ASEAN—have been striving to persuade Burma to join them, but Ne Win seems to be resolved to pursue a consistent policy of neutrality, which has been typical of his country ever since its independence.

An event which opened new prospects for the development of Burma's political life was an amnesty for political prisoners and insurgents, decreed by the government in Rangoon on May 28, 1980. It also affected U Nu, the Prime Minister overthrown by Ne Win in 1962, who had been in prison until 1966 and since then had made several attempts to return to power with the help of reactionary forces abroad.

Economy: Agriculture is Burma's main economic activity and provides a livelihood for two-thirds of the economically active population,which is estimated at 13,000,000. Rice is one of the principal export crops which in the period 1978-1979 accounted for 21% of Burma's total exports. Another traditional export item is valuable hard timber.

Burma possesses important sources of petroleum, tin, copper and coal. It is self-sufficient in the production of crude petroleum, which amounted to 10,000,000 barrels in 1978-1979.

Manufacturing industry is small and is mainly tied to agriculture, although petroleum refining and textile manufacture are important sectors of the national economy.

In 1973 the government changed its earlier opposition to foreign capital investments and to credits and aid from capitalist countries, and joined the Asian Development Bank. In November 1976, the World Bank set up a consultative group for aid to Burma in order to expedite the assistance to that country by capitalist states, which in February 1978 reached 200,000,000 dollars. In 1979, the World Bank agreed to finance a four-year programme of reviving Burma's rubber industry.

The yields of the principal crops in 1978 included 10,500,000 metric tons of rice, 1,791,000 tons of sugar cane, and 94,000 tons of wheat. Timber production amounted to 22,474,000 cu.m.

In the same year, FAO livestock statistics included 7,865,000 head of cattle, 1,855,000 buffaloes, 1,915,000 pigs, 221,000 sheep, 615,000 goats, and 20,866,000 poultry. Meat production stood at 78,000 tons of beef, 16,000 tons of buffalo meat, 74,000 tons of pork, and 20,000 tons of dressed poultry. The total fish catch was 518,000 tons in the previous year.

In the period 1978-1979, the mining industry extracted 38,000 tons of coal, 10,501,000 U.S. barrels of crude petroleum, 12,638,000,000 cu. feet of natural gas, 5,198 tons of refined lead, 6,000 tons of zinc concentrates, and 1,372 tons of tin concentrates.

In the same period, industrial production included 239,000 tons of salt, 44,000 tons of cane sugar, 12,600 tons of cotton thread, 350,000 tons of cement, 67,000,000 gallons of petrol, and 326,000 tons of kerosene.

In 1978 Burma's external trade showed a deficit of 448,100,000 kyats—the national currency—due to an imbalance between 2,114,000,000 kyats worth of imports and 1,665,900,000 kyats worth of exports. The main export items included rice and rice products (288,200,000 kyats), teak and hard timber (733,600,000 kyats), and metals and minerals (155,300,000 kyats).

Burma's foreign monetary reserves in 1978 included 10,800,000 dollars in gold, 3,800,000 dollars in special bonds, and 92,600,000 dollars in foreign exchange, adding up to the total of 107,200,000 dollars.

According to press reports, in the course of implementing its second four-year development plan, Burma increased its national income by 17.4%, its agricultural production by 15%, and its mining output by 50%. Over the same four-year period, per capita income went up 14.4%

Government: Under the constitution proclaimed in January 1974, the supreme body of the Burmese state is the People's Assembly of 464 members, which is endowed with legislative powers and is elected by popular vote. The People's Assembly elects from among its members a State Council of 29 members, which, in turn, elects from its ranks its chairman, who is the President of the Union and thus also the head of state. The cabinet—a council of ministers—is also elected by the People's Assembly.

The State Council is the supreme executive body and coordinates the work of the central and local governmental bodies and agencies. The council of ministers is responsible for the different sectors of public administration.

Armed forces: In 1979, Burma had 169,500 men serving in its armed forces, 153,000 of them in the army, 9,000 in the navy, and 7,500 in the air force. In addition, the People's Police Force had 38,000 men and the People's Militia 35,000 men.

Organizations: Under the constitution currently in effect, the only officially recognized party is the Socialist Programme Party which was founded by Ne Win. There are many organizations and political parties existing outside the constitution. These include the Unified Workers' Party, which came into being as a result of a merger of the Workers' Unity and the People's Comrades parties, or the "White Banner" Burmese Communist Party of Maoist ideology, which heads a movement of armed struggle against the Burmese government with Chinese material assistance.

There also exist the People's Workers' Council, established in 1964, and the People's Council of Peasants, founded in 1969, which provided the base for the institution in 1977 of the Burmese Workers' Organization and the Burmese Peasants' Organization.

Education: Primary education is free. In the school term 1978-1979, there were 23,099 primary schools with 3,731,160 pupils and 84,593 teachers, 1,302 middle schools with 754,079 pupils and 19,964 teachers, 596 superior schools with 170,660 students and 11,469 teachers, two universities and 33 colleges with 112,671 students and 3,922 teachers.

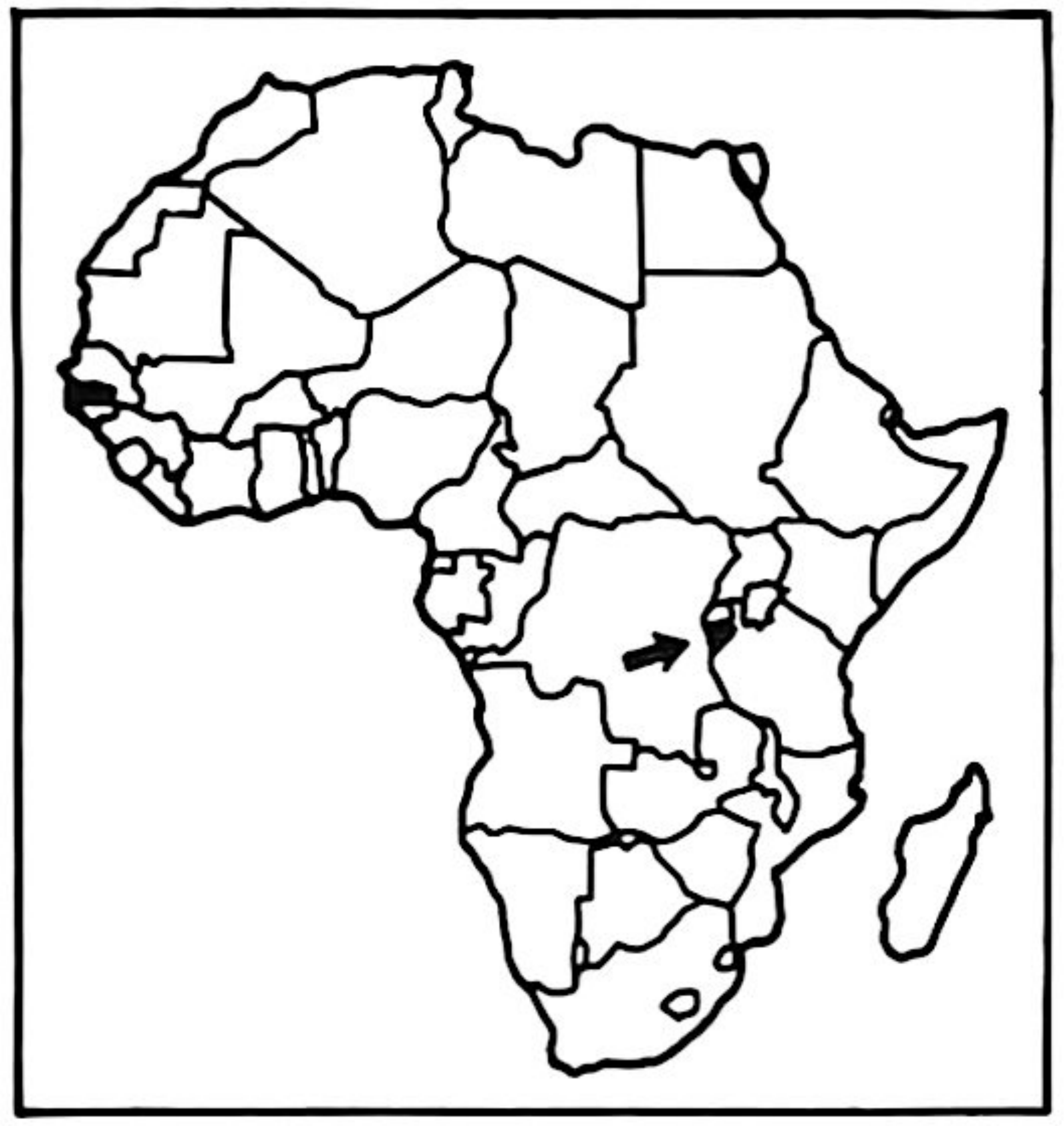
There were also 16 teacher-training colleges with 5,103 students and 367 teachers, and 52 technical and agricultural colleges with 9,576 students and 786 teachers.

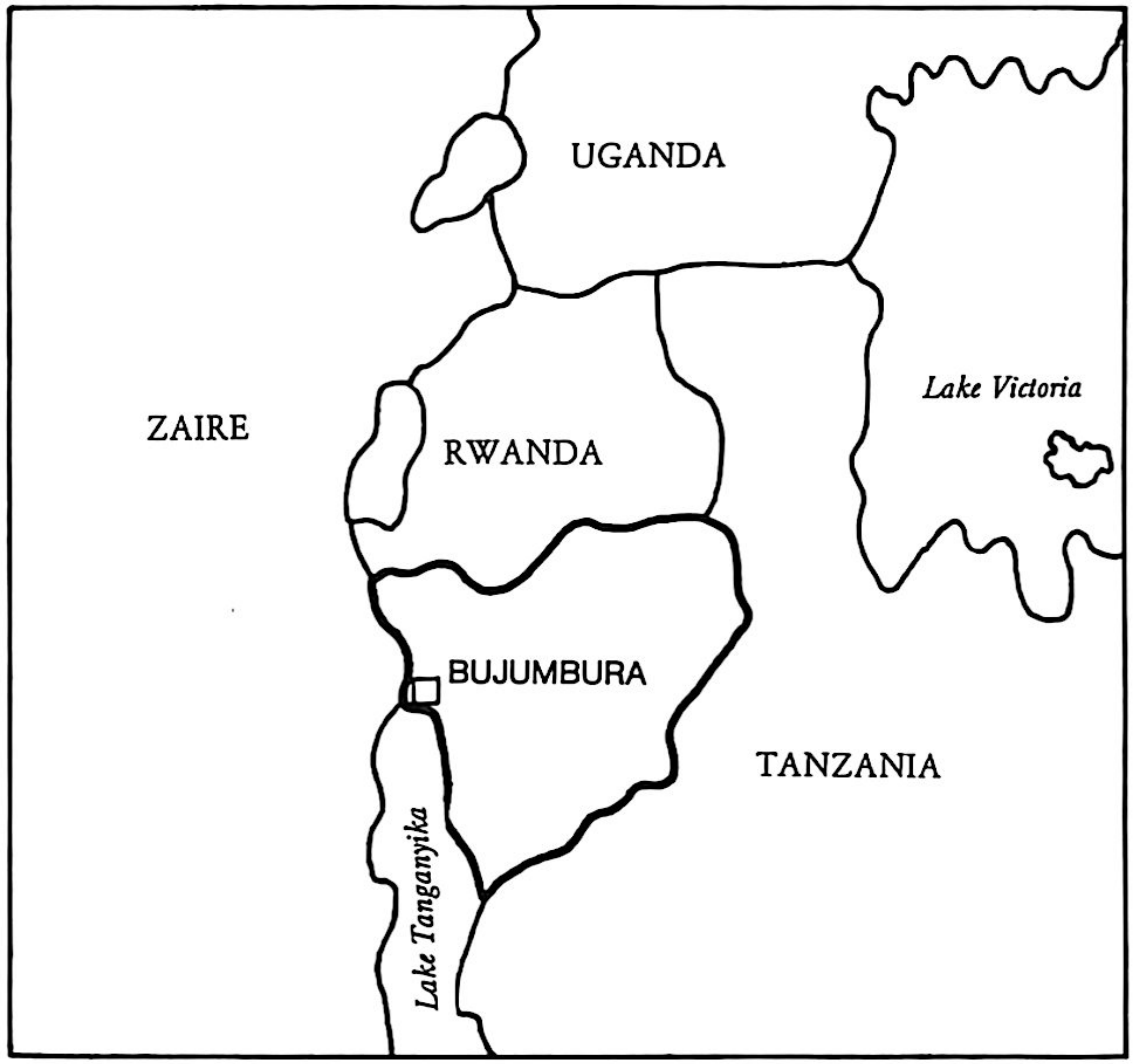
An intensive literacy campaign is currently under way, in which students go to the country to teach during their school holidays. One million adult peasants learned to read and write in 1980.

Public health: In 1979, there were 538 hospitals in Burma with the total capacity of 23,330 beds. Medical care is free. At present there is one doctor per 5,410 inhabitants.

Religion: More than 75% of the population profess Buddhism. There are also Moslem, Christian and animist minorities.

BURUNDI




UGANDA
Lake Victoria
ZAIRE
RWANDA
BUJUMBURA
TANZANIA
Lake Tanganyika

Official name: The Republic of Burundi.
Area: 27,834 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Burundi borders on Rwanda, in the east and the south on Tanzania, and in the west on Zaire and Lake Tanganyika.
Population: 3,987,128 inhabitants (1978). The major ethnic groups are the Hutu (80%), the Tutsi (15%) and the Batwa pygmies (1%). In 1975 the annual rate of population growth was 3%.
Capital: Bujumbura (more than 100,000 inhabitants in 1976).
Principal cities: Kitega.
Languages: French and Kirundi are the official languages. Swahili is also spoken.
Public holidays: July 1, Independence Day.
Geography: Burundi is a landocked, mostly mountainous country whose steep hills form the divide between the Nile and the Congo watersheds. In the west are the narrow Ruzizi River plain and the shore of the 772 km-long Lake Tanganyika.

In the interior is a triangular-shaped plateau with the average altitude of 1,540 m, which in the east descends towards Tanzania and the valley of the Maragarazi River. The southernmost tributary of the Nile system, the Luvyronza River, has its source in the south of the country.

The climate is of the equatorial, Amazonian type, humid in the summer and hot in the lowlands, while in the highlands it is temperate. The average rainfall is irregular.

Brief history: Burundi was inhabited for many centuries by Batwa tribes. About five centuries ago, the Bahutu moved in from the northeast, followed by the Watutsi who instituted a feudal system in the country. These two peoples were the predecessors of the present-day Hutu and Tutsi tribes which constitute the majority of the country's population.

The local feudal kingdoms survived until the 19th century, and to this day, feudal rela relations persist in the countryside.

The first European missionaries arrived in the area between 1870 and 1880, and German imperial troops occupied Usumbura in 1890. From there they ranged out to conquer the rest of the country. The king of Burundi was forced to recognize German rule and his country, together with neighbouring Rwanda, was incorporated into what was called German East Africa as a single colony named Rwanda-Urundi.

After the German defeat in World War I, this territory, which had been occupied by Belgium in 1916, was placed under Belgian mandate under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. This status was confirmed in 1923 by the League of Nations which subsequently changed it to a trust. As such it was confirmed in turn by the United Nations Organization in 1946.

In 1925, Belgium imposed on Burundi—then administered jointly with the Congo (today's Zaire)—forced recruitment of labour for the mines of Katanga (today's Shaba province).

The independence struggle waged by the people of neighbouring Congo had a profound impact on the growth of the liberation movement in Burundi. Some twenty political parties emerged between 1959 and 1960 to compete in the first elections ever held in the history of the country. The Unity and National Progress Party (UPRONA), which under the leadership of Prince Louis Rwagasore demanded independence, confirmed its supremacy in the elections. To counter this situation, the colonialists created the Christian Democratic Party and placed at its head one of their own men, Jean Baptiste Ntindendereza.

It was from Burundi, that the Belgian colonial army launched its operations against troops loyal to the government of Patrice Lumumba in Kiwu province in January, 1961.

A resolution adopted by the United Nations on April 27, 1961, urged Belgium to call elections and re-establish the normal activities of political parties in the country. In the elections, held under UN supervision from September 18 to 25 of the same year, UPRONA won 58 of the 64 seats and Prince Rwagasore (a son of King Mwanbutsa) was appointed Prime Minister. However, a month later, on October 13, 1961, he was assassinated by pro-Belgian reactionary forces.

As stipulated by the U.N. Trusteeship Council on June 27, 1962, the territory obtained its independence on July 1 of the same year and was divided into the Republic of Rwanda and the Kingdom of Burundi.

After the assassination of Prince Rwagasore, all the subsequent Premiers were at the same time leaders of UPRONA (Andre Muhurwa, Alben Niamoya, Pierre Ngedandumwe, Joseph Bamina). With the support of King Mwanbutsa, Muhurwa and Niamoya fought for independence and for the complete withdrawal of all Belgian troops, and pursued a policy of social progress and non-alignment.

On May 10, 1965, elections were held to constitute Burundi's first National Assembly, and once again UPRONA won the majority of the seats. However, a revolt against King Mwanbutsa broke out in October of that year, and a brutal repression was launched, in which scores of political leaders were shot. In June 1966, the veteran Tutsi monarch Mwanbutasa IV was overthrown by his son who assumed the royal title under the name Ntare V.

The new king appointed Captain Michel Micombero as Prime Minister; he, too, was a member of the ruling Tutsi group. Micombero was born in 1940 and received his military training in Brussels at the time when Burundi was a part of the Belgian-administered trust territory of Rwanda-Urundi.

Although Ntare had dissolved the Burundi parliament and censured the licentious life of the members of his father's court, he pursued the same domestic and external policy. Only four months after his ascension to power, he was deposed by progressive military officers who had elevated him to the throne and who openly expressed their discontent with the activities of the young king. Ntare fled the country.

On November 29, 1966, Michel Micombero, who held the premiership and the top defence post, proclaimed Burundi a republic. His move was engineered by UPRONA and enjoyed the support of the most radical sectors of the workers' and student movements.

The new government set up a provisional political bureau representing all the sectors of the population. A single trade union was formed and on March 18, 1967, the Federation of Burundi Workers was founded.

The government adopted a number of progressive measures, such as the establishment of producer cooperatives (it should be noted that 90% of the population are peasants); the Commercial Association of Burundi was created, which purchased from the peasants 80% of the coffee, tea and cotton crop, and sold these products to export firms controlled by European interests.

An Institute of Education was founded and the drafting began of a new constitution whose objective was to replace the legislation instituted by the Tutsi royalty.

However, the internal unrest persisted due to tribal differences spurred by domestic and foreign reaction.

A coup against Micombero, led by civilians and military officers, failed on September 16, 1969. Twenty-seven persons were sentenced to death on that occasion. In July 1971, two former cabinet ministers and a number of army officers were arrested on charges of attempting to overthrow the government. In January 1972, nine of the 25 individuals put on trial because they have tried to depose Micombero were sentenced to death, including the former Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Libere Ndabakwaje and Marc Manirakiza, and the former head of the Information Ministry, Jerome Ntungumburanye.

On March 31, 1972, the government reported that ex-king Ntare had staged an invasion of Burundi with mercenary troops in another attempt to topple Michel Micombero. A month later, on April 30, Ntare was killed in Kitega, east of Bujumbura, in a clash with the police forces. According to other reports, Ntare had entered Burundi from Uganda a month earlier, but was promptly arrested and placed under house arrest.

This event was followed by violent fratricidal battles between the Hutu and the Tutsi, the two principal ethnic groups in the country. Some 50,000 people were killed in May 1972 in an offensive of anti-government troops which had landed on the shores of Lake Tanganyika, and more than 100,000 Burundis fled to Uganda to escape the fighting.

These happenings affected the relations between the Bujumbura government and the neighbouring countries of Rwanda and Tanzania. In the Organization of African Unity (OAU), Micombero denounced Rwanda, accusing it of instigating the invasion, and urged the OAU to set up a special commission to investigate the case.

In July 1973, Micombero and Tanzania's President Julius Nyrere reached an understanding and the incidents came to an end. Burundi withdrew its accusations and its relations with Rwanda were normalized. At the same time the Micombero government extended its relations with the frontline states, broke off relations with Israel in the wake of the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, and reached a rapprochement with the Arab countries.

In 1973, too, a new constitution was proclaimed, which confirmed the establishment of a presidential-type government in which all power was concentrated in Micombero's hands. In October 1974 he was re-elected President for another term of seven years, but did not serve this term because in November 1976 a Supreme Revolutionary Council made up of thirty junior officers forced him to give up his powers.

This movement was led by Colonel Baptiste Bagaza, the chief-of-staff of the armed forces. Subsequently, the Council appointed him President of the Republic.

When it assumed control of the country, the Supreme Revolutionary Council announced its intention to fight against government corruption and against tribal conflicts, and for modernization of the national economy and liquidation of feudal practices. As for external policy, it reiterated Burundi's adherence to the policy of non-alignment, maintenance of good relations with its neighbours, and support of the liberation movements in southern Africa. Bagaza also declared that UPRONA and the Union of Burundi Workers were the true possessors of power in the country.

The new government, in which all ethnic groups and regions of the country were represented, took over lands that had been unlawfully appropriated, prosecuted embezzlers of official funds, increased the prices paid to coffee producers for their crop, abolished the traditional systems of servitude, and initiated agricultural reforms.

The government also put into effect a five-year development plan for the period 1978-1982. Investments were channelled mainly into agriculture, the transport system, rural electrfication, and construction of roads linking the country with its neighbours. The annual rate of economic growth envisaged in the plan is six per cent.

UPRONA held its first congress at the end of 1979. The session decided to dissolve the Supreme Revolutionary Council and to name Jean Baptiste Bagaza the party's chairman. It also elected a central committee of 48 members and a political bureau. A new constitution was to be drawn up.

Burundi cooperates with Rwanda and Tanzania in planning the development of the Akarera River Valley, and together with Rwanda and Zaire forms the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries.

Economy: Rwanda's economy is based mainly on agriculture. The country has 2,565,000 hectares of land of which 1,085,000 hectares are arable, 187,000 hectares are used for permanent crops, 435,000 hectares are pastures, 80,000 hectares are covered with woods, while 778,000 hectares are mountainous or otherwise non-productive. The country's economically active population was estimated at 1,965,000 in 1975. The 1978 figures on agricultural production include 398,400 tons of maize, 950,000 tons of bananas, 22,900 tons of coffee, 2,200 tons of cotton, and 800 tons of tea. FAO figures also show the average annual output of 24,000 tons of peanuts, 170,000 tons of dry legumes, and 120,000 tons of sorghum. Livestock figures for 1979 show 819,000 head of cattle, 282,000 sheep, 608,000 goats, and 32,000 pigs. Mining production has been declining in recent years. Its output in 1978 included 30.5 tons of bastnaesite and 49 tons of cassiterite, while nickel production is still in its beginnings. The light industry turns out some foodstuffs, textiles, building materials, chemical products and medicines. 34,287,000 kWh of electricity were produced in 1978. The 1978 gross national product amounted to 610,000,000 dollars. In the same year, the national budget showed a surplus of 14,531,000 dollars (81,787,000 dollars of receipts and 67,256,000 dollars of expenditure). The 1978 balance of trade also showed a surplus amounting to 31,281,000 dollars (98,241,000 dollars worth of exports, mainly cotton, coffee and hides, and 66,960,000 dollars worth of imports), while Burundi's foreign-exchange reserves stood at 83,360,000 dollars. According to World Bank figures, the country's foreign debt in 1975 was 64,000,000 dollars. The national currency is the Burundi franc whose fixed rate of exchange since 1976 has been 90 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Jean Baptiste Bagaza is the head of state and President, assisted by a cabinet of twelve ministers. The office of Prime Minister was abolished in 1978.

Armed forces: The army has some 5,000 men, while an additional 1,500 men serve in paramilitary forces. Colonel Bagaza is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

Organizations: Burundi's sole political party is the Unity and National Progress Party (UPRONA) which promotes the unity of all ethnic groups in the country.

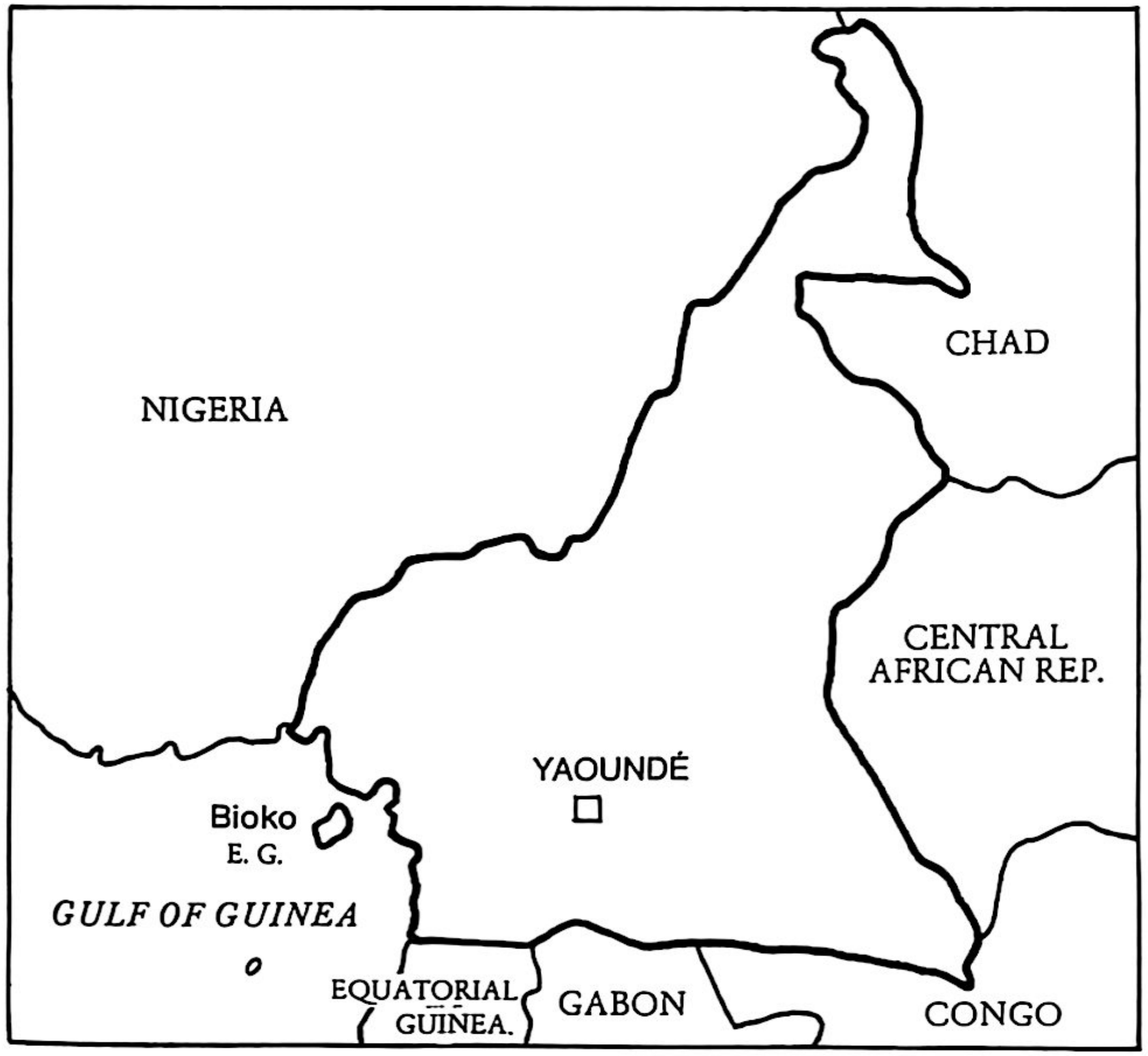
The Union of Burundi Workers (UTB), the Rwagasore Revolutionary Youth (JRR) and the Union of Burundi Women (UMB) are specialized organizations under UPRONA control.

Education: In the school year 1977-1978 there were 142,763 pupils in primary schools, 6,475 students in secondary schools, 1,357 students in secondary technical schools, 6,031 students in teacher-training institutions, and 1,447 university students. The illiteracy rate was 90% in 1975.

Public health: In 1978 there were 22 hospitals in Burundi, 9 maternity clinics and approximately a hundred dispensaries with the total capacity of about 5,000 beds. According to a 1976 report, there was one doctor per 45,430 inhabitants and one nurse per 6,240 inhabitants. There are five dental surgeons in the whole country.

Religion: The most widespread religious creed in Burundi is Roman Catholicism with about 1,500,000 adherents. More than 1,600,000 people practice traditional African cults. Approximately 145,000 people are members of Protestant churches, and a segment of the population are Moslems.

CAMEROON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YAOUNDÉ
Bioko
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GULF OF GUINEA
EQUATORIAL GUINEA.
GABON
CONGO

Official name: The United Republic of Cameroon.
Area: 475,442 sq.km.
Borders: In the northwest Cameroon borders on Nigeria, in the north and northeast on the Republic of Chad, in the west on the Atlantic Ocean, in the south on Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and the People's Republic of Congo, and in the east on the Central African Republic.
Population: 8,248,000 inhabitants in 1979. The annual rate of population growth was 2.2% in the period 1970-1977. There are some 200 ethnic groups, the most important of which are the Kirdi, the Bamileke and the Bamoun.
Capital: Yaounde.
Principal cities: Douala, N'Kongsamba, Bafoussam, Foumban, Garvoua, Victoria, Manoua.
Languages: French and English are the official languages, but, in addition, 24 native languages are spoken in the country.
Public holidays: Independence was gained by Eastern Cameroon on January 1, 1960, and by Western Cameroon on October 1, 1961. In 1972, as a result of a popular referendum dum, the United Republic of Cameroon was proclaimed on May 20. Therefore, it is May 20, which is celebrated as Independence Day.
Geography: In the northern region alluvial deposits formed a vast plateau which extends all the way to the sea. The most prominent elevations rising from that plateau are Mt. Cameroon, 4,070 m high, the Bambuto range, reaching 2,740 m at its highest point, and the Manenguba Mountains, rising to 2,420 m.

The volcanic Mt. Cameroon spreads out to the north and northwest, where bauxite, copper and sulphur deposits are to be found.

Cameroon has an extensive network of rivers, most of which are navigable and therefore provide a natural transportation network. The major rivers are the Sanaga (920 km), the Nyong (860 km), and the N'Temyel Mungo, 120 km of which are navigable.

There are also many lakes, the principal ones being the Elephant, the Sodem and the Great End Lakes, the last one reaching the depth of 208 m and being situated in the crater of a volcano.

Cameroon has a humid, equatorial climate in the south with temperatures ranging from 24 to 30°C. In the north the climate is of a tropical character.

Brief history: Cameroon's oldest inhabitants are Pygmy tribes. There are three major language groups: Bantu in the south, Sudanese in the north, and Bantu in the west. The Bantu people settled in what is today Cameroon after having migrated there from the border zone between Cameroon and Nigeria.

Known from Cameroon's pre-colonial history is the existence of the Sao civilization in the north in the 13th and 14th centuries. The Mandara Kingdom emerged in the 15th century and was converted to Islam by the Arab-dominated Bornu Empire. In the 17th century, the pastoral Peul people reached Bornu and subjected the local tribes to their rule. The Bamileke Confederation formed in the southwest in the 15th and 16th centuries. The Fang people began to settle the south in the 17th century and a hundred years later established themselves in Gabon as well. In the 18th century, the Bamoun tribe formed an autonomous kingdom.

The first Europeans to reach Cameroon were Portuguese navigators who explored the coasts of what are today Angola, Gabon and Congo in 1472.

Trade in ivory, palm oil and slaves attracted first the English, then the French, and finally the Germans, all of whom successively dominated the area until the rapacious struggle between the imperialist powers of that era ended with the possession of the territory of Cameroon by the Germans.

The peoples of Cameroon put up strong resistance, first against the slave-hunters (Spanish, English and Portuguese), and later against the French and German colonizers.

This native opposition forced the Germans and the British to subject the coastal areas to naval bombardment in order to save their factories and forestry installations where most of the labourers died as a result of the inhuman working conditions to which they were subjected.

The Germans had to organize sixty military expeditions in order to establish their rule over the interior of the country, and it was only through the conclusion of a treaty with the Sultan of Adamaua, that they finally broke the native resistance.

In World War I, the German protectorate established over a part of the territory called the Cameroon was conquered by British and French troops and was re-partitioned. In 1920 it was divided and assigned as a mandate by the League of Nations to Great Britain, which got the western part, and to France which was entrusted with the administration of the eastern part.

In 1936, some prominent personalities and trade union groups in French Cameroon obtained the right to affiliate with the metropolitan trade unions, which encouraged autonomist sentiments.

After World War II, in 1946, Cameroon became a United Nations trust territory. Two years later, in 1948, Ruben Um Nyobe founded the Union of the Cameroon Peoples Party (UPC) which succeeded in unifying the different trends and movements of the independence struggle. The UPC became a section of the African Democratic Union (RDA).

This upsurge of nationalism was suppressed by the colonialists who organized the Douala massacre in May 1955. After that event, the banned UPC prepared for armed struggle against the French domination. The Cameroon leaders found refuge in the forests from where they organized guerilla warfare. Ruben Um Nyobe was assassinated in 1958.

Gradually, the UPC succeeded in establishing itself as a powerful political force with which the population identified itself.

When independence already became inevitable, the French preferred to be succeeded by the National Cameroon Union (UNC), founded by Ahmadou Ahidjo in 1958, and made the UNC leader the first President of the country.

Eastern Cameroon, administered by France, achieved its independence on January 1, 1960. In the British-administered part, the United Nations held two plebiscites—in 1959 and 1961. The north was united with the Federation of Nigeria, while the south chose to be integrated with the Republic of Cameroon. As a result of this integration, the Federal Republic of Cameroon was established on October 1, 1961. Through a referendum, Ahmadou Ahidjo turned the federation into a unitary state, and on May 20, 1972, the United Republic of Cameroon was born.

The first step taken by the new government in 1960 was aimed at suppressing the UPC, and a civil war broke out, which brought immense suffering to the population.

In 1975, the UNC held a "Maturity Congress" which still further strengthened the powers of President Ahidjo without adopting any specific programme.

Ahidjo's government relies on the traditional tribal structure and on an army which does not concern itself with any frontier-guard duties or with participation in the implementation of development tasks.

General elections were held in April 1975 to elect members of the National Assembly, and in May the Assembly not only confirmed Ahidjo as President, but also created the office of Prime Minister who was to be the head of government. A new cabinet was set up in June, headed by Premier Paul Biya who was re-appointed in 1980, five months after a UNC congress held in February of that year.

In the course of the 1970s the Cameroon government realized changes in its foreign policy, including the establishment of diplomatic ties with several socialist countries. In the same decade, Cameroon took a number of steps which made it less dependent on France. In 1972, it became the first country to call for a revision of cooperation agreements with France, and a year later, on July 1, 1973, it withdrew from the pro-French Afro-Mauritanian Community Organization under the pretext of Cameroon's bilingual character. Another manifestation of this trend was the absence of Cameroon in April 1977 at a French-sponsored conference of heads of state of French-speaking African states held in the Senegalese capital of Dakar.

Nevertheless, groups opposing the government assert that it is pursuing an ambiguous African policy because while it does support some liberation movements on the African continent, it also favours some neocolonialist interests.

In March 1976, the Yaounde government recognized the People's Republic of Angola. At the OAS summit conference held in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum in the summer of 1978, Cameroon did not express itself in favour of the French-proposed formation of an inter-African force which would intervene on the African continent, and maintained a prudent attitude towards the opposition trends within the OAS.

Economy: Cameroon's economy is based on agriculture which is pursued on 7,300,000 hectares of the total cultivable area of 46,944,000 hectares by 82% of the economically active population whose number was estimated at 2,600,000 in 1974. The country produces annually 200,000 tons of cocoa, its principal export crop, 160,000 tons of coffee, the second principal export item, 360,000 tons of maize, 300,000 tons of millet, 80,762 tons of bananas, 40,680 tons of cotton (1978), 18,000 tons of rubber (1977-1978), 60,000 tons of peanuts (1977-1978), 20,000 tons of fibres, 57,000 tons of dried beans, 42,000 tons of palm kernels, 2,000 tons of tea, and 600 tons of sesame seed. Livestock herds include 3,600,000 head of cattle, 2,000,000 sheep and 2,100,000 goats, while the fish catch was 25,000 tons in 1979 and the forests yielded 1,270,000 cu.m of timber in the 1977-1978 period.

In 1978, Cameroon began to expand its petroleum output with the annual production of 1,500,000 tons, which figure is expected to rise in the near future to 3,000,000 tons. The current output is sufficient to cover a part of Cameroon's own needs and to export the rest. The off-shore petroleum field at Victoria required the construction of the large dike. The Kribi region holds reserves of 400,000,000 cu.m of natural gas and 200,000,000 tons of iron ore with 40% iron content.

Cameroon's light industry produced in the period 1976-1977 62,000 tons of palm oil, 1,400 tons of nitrogen fertilizers and 1,000 tons of phosphates in 1976-1977, 1,130,000 kWh of electricity and 44,000 of aluminium (in 1973) from ore imported from Guinea by the ALUCAM corporation which is a branch of the Pechiney Corporation and in which the Cameroon government has an 8.5% interest. CIMENCAM—the Cameroon Cement Corporation—produces annually 350,000 tons of cement. The national merchant fleet had 18 vessels in 1975. totalling 3,199 registered tons. The mining industry, which is insignificant, extracts non-metallic minerals.

According to available World Bank figures, Cameroon's gross national product amounted to 3,700,000,000 dollars in 1978, and its per capita GNP was 460 dollars in the same year. Between 1970 and 1977, real per capita GNP grew by one per cent. The national budget for the fiscal year 1978-1979 was balanced at 165,000,000,000 CFA francs. In the same year, the balance of trade showed a deficit of 25,426,000,000 CFA francs because imports worth 216,436,000,000 CFA francs were not covered by exports whose value was only 191,010,000,000 CFA francs. Cameroon's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 50,000,000 dollars in 1977. Its external public debt in 1975, as reported by the World Bank, was 361,700,000 dollars. The national currency is the CFA franc whose rate of exchange in March 1978 was 235.68 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The government of the United Republic of Cameroon is headed by a President as the head of state, and a Prime Minister who is the head of government. There is a unicameral National Assembly of 120 members who are elected for a term of five years by all citizens over twenty-one years. The Prime Minister, the cabinet ministers and their deputies, just as the governors of the seven provinces are appointed by the President.

The judiciary is formed by a Supreme Court at Yaounde, which is made up of a President and seven judges, then there is a Prosecutor General, an Attorney General with several assistants, and the head of the Civil Register with several assessors. A High Court of Justice consists of nine judges and six substitute judges, all of whom are elected by the National Assembly.

The 120 seats in the National Assembly are occupied by members of the "sole party". Other government bodies include an Economic and Social Council established under the constitution to advise the government on economic and social matters. It has replaced earlier regional bodies which had performed this duty until 1975 when the constitution was amended. The constitution was enacted on May 20, 1972.

Armed Forces: The country's armed corps are divided between the armed forces proper and the gendarmerie. Military expenditure accounts for approximately 20% of the total national budget.

The army has 5,500 men, the air force 300 men, the navy 200, men, and there are some 1,000 men serving in paramilitary units according to 1978 figures.

Organizations: The working-class struggle in Cameroon dates back more than 80 years to the time when workers from the Douala docks went on strike to force the colonial authorities to improve the living conditions of the masses of workers.

There are two trade-union centres in the country- the official National Union of Cameroon Workers, founded in 1971, and the Cameroon Workers' Centre (CTC) which was outlawed by the government in that same year.

However, in spite of the official character imposed on the central trade union organization, Cameroon's railway workers staged a massive strike on July 3, 1974.

There is a pronounced fragmentation of the Cameroon trade-union movement, due to the influence of the U.S. AFL-CIO trade union central which has encouraged the formation of different trade unions in different parts of the country and in different branches of the national economy. This presence of U.S. trade unions is due to the activity in Cameroon of powerful American corporations.

Cameroon's "sole party", which was officially proclaimed, is the Cameroon National Union led by President Ahmadou Ahidjo. Its official press organ is the *Official Journal of the United Republic of Cameroon*, which is published every two weeks in an edition of 1,500 copies.

Other political organizations, such as the Union of Cameroon People's (UPC), were banned by the government. The UPC had pioneered the struggle for total independnece of the country. In 1962, it organized guerilla warfare and formed a Revolutionary Committee. In April 1963, it convened an assembly in one of Cameroon's regions. Its leaders were eliminated by repression.

A youth organization - the Youth of the Cameroon National Union (JUNC)—was formed in 1966. There is also a Women's Organization of the Cameroon National Union (OFUNC), founded in 1965. Both organizations are subordinated to the UNC.

Public health: Cameroon has 89 hospitals with a total of 11,500 beds. There are 225 doctors, 10 dental surgeons and 1,178 nurses.

Education and sport: Of the total of 1,275,000 registered pupils and students in Cameroon, 90.3% attend primary schools in the south and 30% in the north, 9.3% attend secondary schools, and 0.4% are enrolled in universities. 40% of the children who enter the first class of primary schools leave school at the age of ten or eleven. There are 828 private schools in the country with a staff of 5,800 teachers and with 302,000 pupils.

The Federal University of Yaounde, which opened in November 1962, had a student body of approximately 6,000 in 1974.

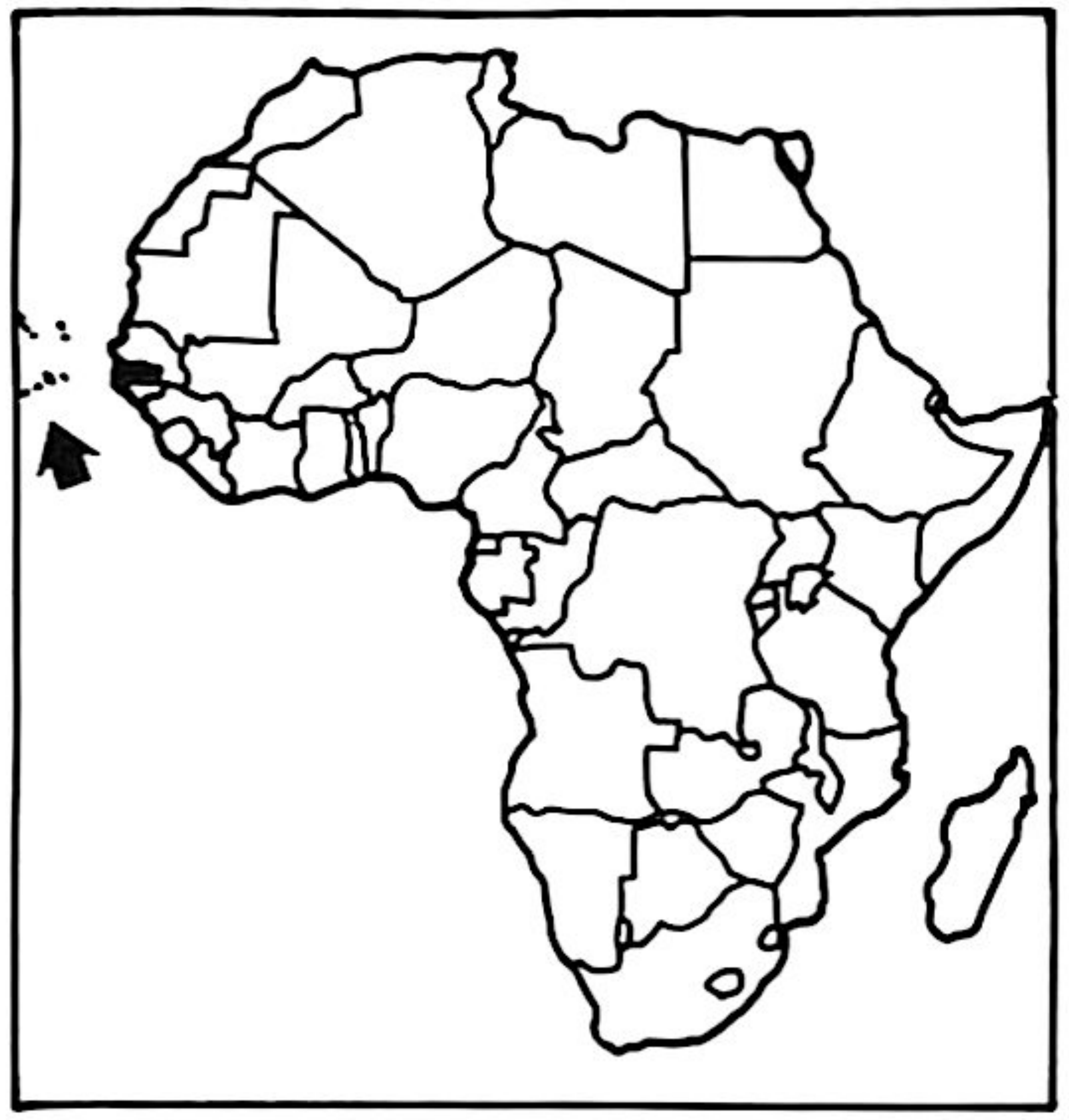
Cameroon's educational system combines different cultures due to the many ethnic groups which form the Cameroon nation.

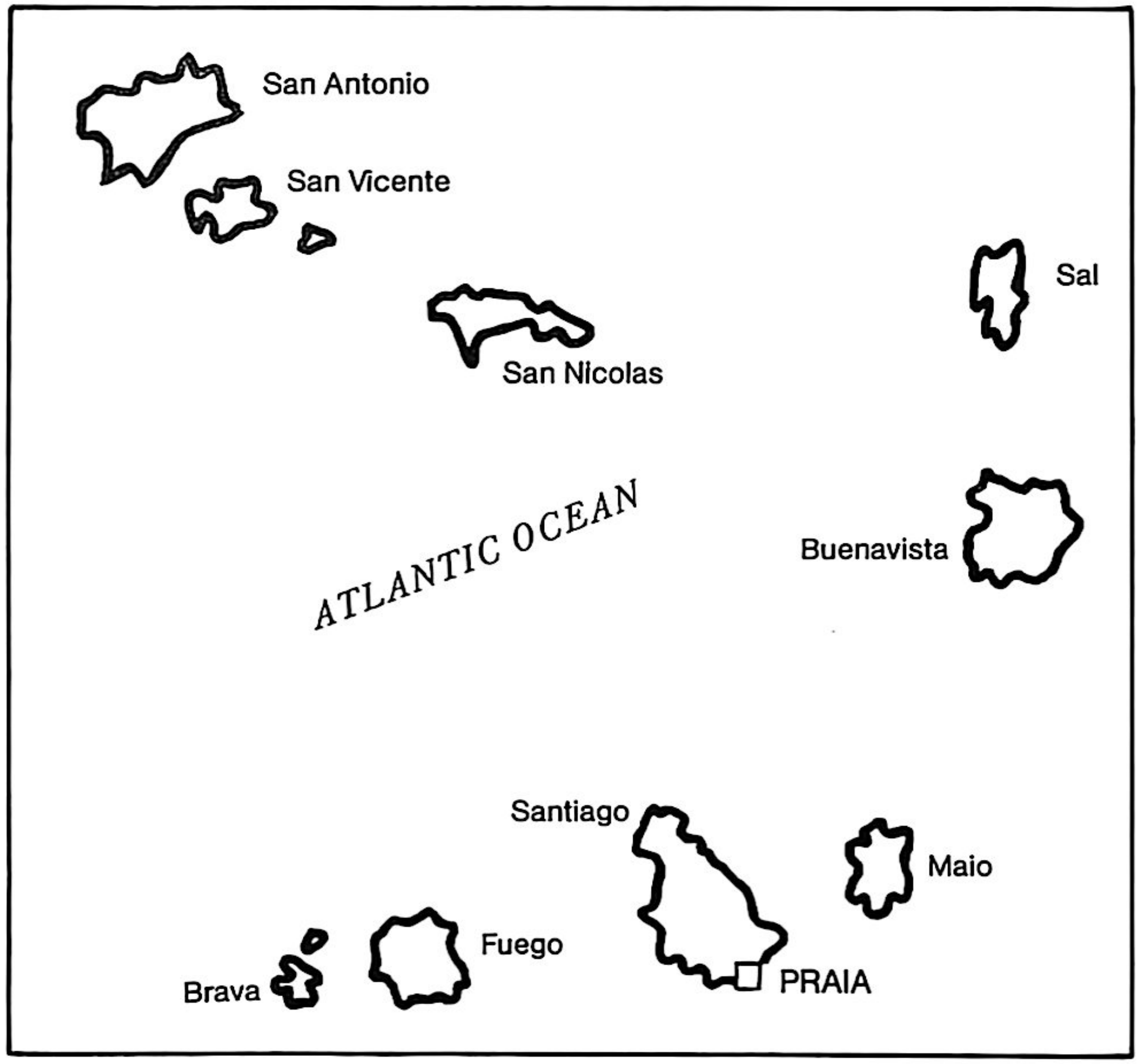
There is a high rate of illiteracy.

The most popular sport is football.

Religion: 45% of the population practise traditional animist cults, 20%—most of them in the north—are Moslems, and the remaining 35% are Christians. Among the Christians, 21% are Roman Catholics.

CAPE VERDE





Official name: Republic of Cape Verde.
Area: 4,033 sq.km.
Borders: The Cape Verde islands lie some 500 km off the western coast of Africa and are 450 km away from Dakar, the capital of Senegal.
Population: 325,000 inhabitants according to a 1977 estimate. The majority are mestizos. The average population density is 74.4 inhabitants per sq.km and the annual rate of population growth is 2.4%.
Capital: Praia (40,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Mindelo
Languages: Portuguese is the official language. The population speaks Creole, which is a native language.
Public holidays: July 5, Foundation of the Republic.
Geography: The territory of Cape Verde is made up of ten principal islands and many islets of volcanic origin. They are divided into two groups traditionally known as the Windward Islands (Sao Antao, Sao Vicente, Santa Luzia, Sao Nicolau, Boa Vista and Sal) and the Leeward Islands (Maio, Santiago, Fogo, and Brava). There is not much vegetation, most of it palms and coconut trees. Except for three of the islands, the others are mountainous and of volcanic origin. Mt.Fogo is the tallest peak with its 2,613m and is an active volcano. Temperature varies from 20 to 27 C. Rainfall is scant and there is almost chronic drought.
Brief history: Histroians differ as to whether it was in 1445 or 1456, when the Cape Verde Islands were discovered and whether their discovery was made by Nuno Tristao or not. It may well have been he, who found the islands, because it was precisely between those two years, when this Portuguese navigator sailed along the western coast of Africa. He was the first European to have touched on the coast of Upper Guinea in 1446. However, others claim that it had been the Italians, Luigi da Cadamosto and Uso di Mare, who, having been commissioned by the Portuguese, explored Senegambia, discovered the Cape Verde Islands, and went as far as Timbuctu (in present-day Mali) between 1445and 1456.

Little is know of the first inhabitants of the Cape Verde Islands, who left traces of their presence in the form of rock paintings on the island of Santiago. But it is known that the islands had been inhabited by the Lebou and Felupe peoples long before the arrival of the first colonizers.

Some families from the south of Portugal arrived to settle on the islands and somewhat later came with the same intention; small numbers of Dutch, Spanish, Norman, Breton and English settlers.

The immigrants established a system of plantations which required abundant and cheap labour. The first slaves were brought to Cape Verde at the end of the 15th century. They came from practically all the ethnic groups inhabiting Guinea. Some were kept on the estates established on the islands, and others were shipped to Spanish America. Thus, the islands were not only recipients of slaves but also a slave warehouse.

Inter-breeding beween the Europeans and the Africans was inevitable and this is the reason why today almost three quarters of the Cape Verde population are mestizos.

As early as at the end of the 18th century, the Portuguese plantation owners who grew coffee, maize and oil seeds were in the position to export a large part of their production. When Brazilian coffee began to compete successfully with Cape Verde coffee, the growers partially replaced this crop first with sugar cane and later with cocoa.

When slavery was abolished in the late 19th century, the inhabitants of Cape Verde became sharecroppers.

The five centuries of Portuguese colonialism changed very little in the conditions prevailing on the islands as far as introduction of new ideas and improvements is concerned.

Outdated forms of farming were preserved in agriculture and the colonizers naturally did not create either the foundations or the basic means of the country's development. Due to unchecked exploitation, the islands' natural environment was changed to such an extent, that they became floating deserts with the situation further aggravated by constant drought.

Because the local economy could not sustain the farming population, massive emigration, occurred, supported and directed by the colonial authorities towards Portugal. In 1975, 40,000 Cape Verdians lived in Portugal, working as construction workers, miners, in the public services and other low-paid jobs. Other Cape Verdians moved to Sao Tome and Principe, Angola, Guinea Bissau, and the United States. Those, who could not emigrate, suffered from repeated famines—historical records report seven of them: in 1901, 1903, 1921, 1942, 1948, 1952 and 1959—in which 210,000 people died.

Historically, the importance of Cape Verde rested in its strategic position. At first, the Portuguese used the islands as a station on their trading routes to Africa, India and Brazil. Then, they were a key point on the Atlantic route used by Western oil tankers on their way to Europe from the Arabian-Persian Gulf. The islands were also converted into an air and naval base, and the Portuguese regime, which was overthrown in 1974, made quite clear its intention to include Cape Verde into the NATO sphere of influence. Portuguese and Brazilian navies periodically conducted naval manoeuvres in Cape Verde waters within the framework of the Pentagon plans to dominate the South Atlantic. It is estimated that some 90% of the Middle East petroleum shipped to the West and almost 45% of all the maritime trade of the NATO countries passes near the western coast of Africa and this group of islands.

The geographic isolation of the Cape Verde Islands was one of the factors which at first hampered their merger with Guinea Bissau. With the emergence of the Party for the Independence of Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC) in 1956, organized unity of the struggle against colonial domination was achieved.

The PAIGC activities in Cape Verde had as their primary objective the creation—through clandestine work of mobilizing and organizing the population—of the minimum, essential conditions for securing political struggle on the islands.

After the overthrow of the Salazar dictatorship, the Portuguese right wanted to maintain its domination of Cape Verde and for this purpose stirred up differences with the Guineans and tried to claim that Cape Verde was an "overseas province" as Portuguese as the Azores.

The case of Cape Verde as a colony was submitted by Guinea Bissau to the Fourth Committee of the U.N. General Assembly in 1974.

A new stage of the independence struggle began. The Portuguese government was pressured to accept the PAIGC as the legitimate representative of the Cape Verde people, just as it was of the people of Guinea Bissau, and that it was therefore entitled to head the transition government which was set up at the beginning of 1975. That government lasted only six months because on July 5, 1975, the Republic of Cape Verde was constituted under a government led and directed by the PAIGC.

The first task which the government had to undertake was to prevent the people from starving to death after a decade of constant drought which devastated the islands' agriculture. The local population and international solidarity were mobilized to combat the drought. Some underground water resources, left unexploited by the colonialists, were used for irrigation purposes.

An agrarian reform was launched, land was nationalized (some of the islands had been in the possession of half a dozen large estate owners), and peasants were encouraged to organize in cooperatives.

In 1976, an air route was opened to link Bissau and Praia by fortnightly flights, and joint working groups were set up for scientific and technological studies and for an exchange of agricultural products.

In the middle of 1977, a group of counter-revolutionaries was arrested following an abortive coup. They included former informers of the Portuguese secret police—PIDE—who carried out their subversive activities mainly in Sao Vicente and Porto Novo. They had close contacts with anti-nationalist individuals living abroad. Due to quick and firm action by the political leadership of the country, the situation was brought under control and calm was restored on the islands.

Under PAIGC leadership, Cape Verde undertook the realization of an economic and social programme which has as its objective the elimination of all vestiges of the old colonial regime.

The Third Congress of the PAIGC, held from November 13 to 20, 1977, called for the creation of a society free of all exploitation, and re-asserted the intention to establish gradually a unity between the independent and sovereign republics of Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde. At the same time, the congress objectively analyzed the social reality in the country with its colonial heritage. The platform adopted by the congress not only has the character of a programme of work and development of the party proper in the coming years, but also projects a plan of the socio-economic development of the two countries.

Nevertheless, the political process in Cape Verde has had to confront a number of obstacles. There was factionalism, instigated and fomented by imperialism and the old metropolitan country. In 1979, the Cape Verde Congress of the PAIGC expelled four prominent party members, including the Minister of Health and the Secretary of State for Finance. The National Council declared that it would "concern itself with the grave problem of the persistent activities of a faction within the Party, consisting of elements who had infiltrated the Party and who are in contact with Trotskyist ideology". President Aristides Pereira specified that the Council had decided to launch a large-scale campaign designed to explain "the methods used by Trotskyism" which "is trying to provoke a split within the Party and to destabilize the regime".

When a group headed by Joao Bernardo Vieira (Nino) took power in Guinea Bissau in November 1980, the Cape Verde government did not approve of what had happended in that country and the ties between the two republics notably deteriorated, even though subsequently there were indications of an improvement.

On January 20, 1981, the constitution was announced in Praia of a party of national character, based on the Cape Verde organization of the PAIGC, which named itself the African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV).

In February 1981, the country's second government under President Aristides Pereira took office, headed by Premier Pedro Pires and made up of men whose average age is forty. This new executive body took up its duties a week after the proclamation of the Constitution of the Republic of Cape Verde.

In his speech at the inauguration ceremony, the President underlined the efforts needed to renovate and consolidate the state apparatus and expressed his certainty that the government would adjust the administration of the country to the current stage of building a new society. Premier Pires confirmed that Cape Verde would continue pursuing a foreign policy based on the principles of non-alignment, peaceful coexistence, defence of peace and detente, and struggle for a new international economic order.

Economy: The mainstay of the Cape Verde economy is agriculture which is pursued on 40,000 hectares out of the total area of 403,000 hectares and which produces annually some 13,000 tons of maize and 7,000 tons of bananas and vegetables. In the livestock sector there were in 1978, 12,000 head, of cattle, 2,000 sheep, 22,000 goats, and 20,000 pigs. The main obstacle hampering agricultural development in Cape Verde is lack of water, which the authorities are trying to overcome with the construction of dams. There are no minerals in commercial quantities and industry is extremely weak, producing only a few commodities, among them 6,000 tons of cement and 6,000,000 kWh of electric power in 1973. Gross national product amounted to 79,000,000 dollars in 1974, when the balance of trade showed a deficit of 36,000,000 dollars (48,000,000 dollars worth of imports and 12,000,000 dollars of exports). The 1972 budget had a surplus of 2,500,000 dollars (11,000,000 dollars of income and 8,500,000 dollars of expenditure). The national currency is the escudo whose rate of exchange was 45.66 per U.S. dollar in 1978.

The chronic drought, which has been scorching the country, destroyed in 1979 the crops in the non-irrigated areas. The situation markedly deteriorated compared with 1978, resulting in a 70% deficit in the production of cereals which are the staple diet on the islands.

When reviewing the country's achievements on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the independence of Cape Verde, Premier Pedro Pires underlined that the basic task had been and will continue to be the fight against the drought and against unemployment which to a large extent is due to the former. New sources of permanent employment will be created by expanding fishing and handicrafts activities which are to be enlarged through a plan intended to replace imports. It is envisaged that dockyards will be opened and cement mills will be built to cover the needs of construction of projects to conserve water, a fishing industry is to be established, together with freezing plants to conserve the catch, and in this respect the port of Sao Vicente may acquire international importance. The tourist industry will also be encouraged.

Premier Pires indicated that the full application of the agrarian reform is posing extremely complex problems due to the dissimilarities existing between the individual islands, but that this fact notwithstanding, relations of production have markedly changed, as land tenants, sharecroppers and land owners negotiate their contracts on the basis of equality in accordance with the laws of the country.

Government: Under the Constitution of the Republic of Cape Verde, proclaimed in February 1981, the central body of state power is the National Assembly, while a Council of Ministers exercises executive power. The Prime Minister is the head of the government.

Armed forces: The armed forces are in the stage of development from the People's Militia, for which purpose they are receiving advice from friendly countries.

Organizations: In the middle of January 1981, the Cape Verde section of the PAIGC held a special conference which publicly announced, after its conclusion on January 20, the constitution of a new African Party for the Independence of Cape Verde (PAICV). This new political organization has a national character and has thereby separated from the Guinean section which preserved its original name. Aristides Pereira was re-elected Secretary General of the PAICV and Pedro Pires Assistant Secretary General.

The PAICV issued an appeal for the re-activation of the youth, workers' and women's organizations which are currently in a stage of reorganization.

Education and sports: One of the ills inherited from Portuguese colonialism is illiteracy which affects a large number of the Cape Verde population. Secondary-school students act as teachers who are waging the literacy and education campaign in evening courses held in primary-school classrooms. The government is endeavouring to guarantee education to children and youth of school age, but is encountering major problems—lack of teachers and professors, insufficient educational facilities, and an absence of textbooks which meet the requirements of the new objective of education, that is raising the new generation in accordance with the changed realities of the country.

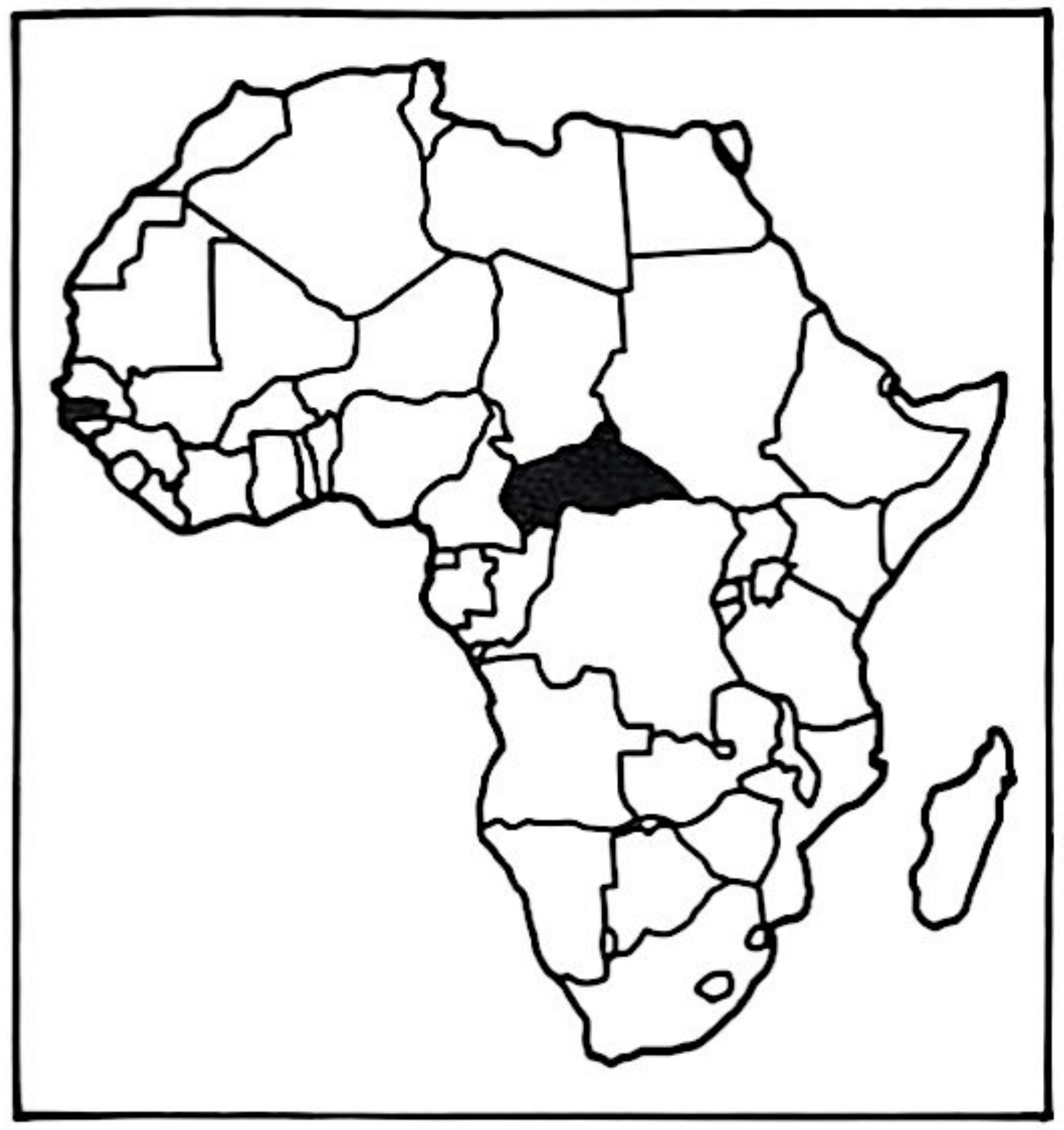
Educational tasks are given priority and a true educational explosion is under way throughout the country. There are 61,000 children attending primary schools, 2,800 students are enrolled in secondary schools, 5,500 students attend preparatory schools, and there are 360 students in teacher-training schools.

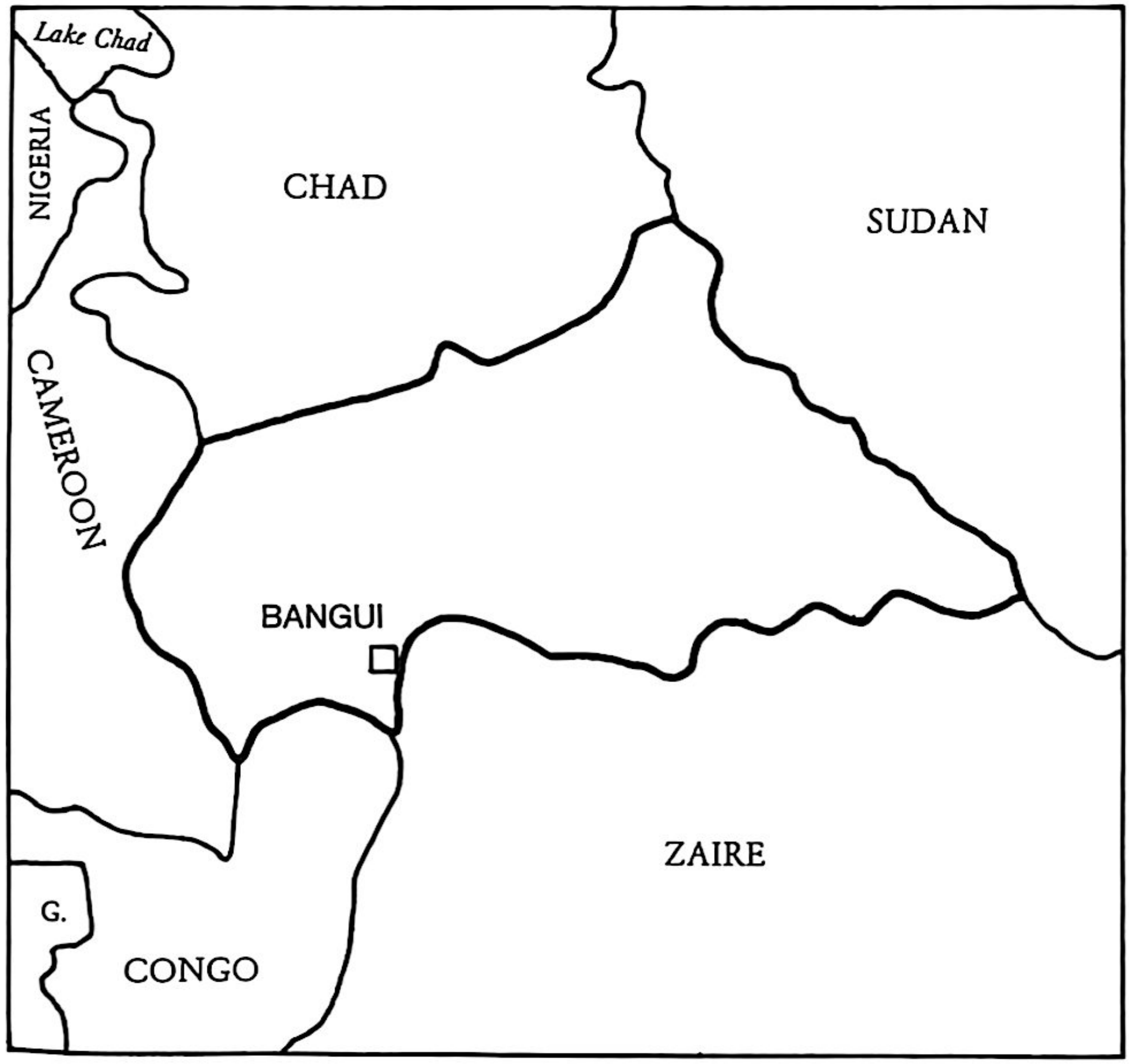
The most popular sport in Cape Verde is football.

Public health: In 1976, Cape Verde had 26 doctors and four hospitals. One is in Praia and has 271 beds, another one is in Sao Vicente with 96 beds, the third one is in Sao Felipe and has 33 beds, and the fourth hospital—with 30 beds—is located in Ribeira Grande.

Religion: The majority of the population are Roman Catholics, but there are also some traditional African cults.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC





pioned by France.

It was then, that Bokassa's ties with the French President turned into a notorious scandal when the press revealed that the "Emperor" had given valuable presents to Valery Giscard d'Estaing whom he called his "cousin".

In January 1979, student unrest in Bangui claimed 400 dead and in April Bokassa ordered the massacre of 100 children with the help of Zairean troops. In September of the same year, the ex-President David Dacko, Bokassa's advisor and relative, seized power with the help of French paratroopers who had been sent to the country allegedly at the request of Dacko "to assist in the re-establishment of the Republic". Abandoned by his most influential friends in France (in view of the large-scale murders), Bokassa found refuge in the Ivory Coast.

In August 1980, Dacko dismissed Premier Bernard Ayandho and Vice-President Henri Maidou, accusing them of conspiracy. In that year, the French financial assistance to the Central African Republic was raised to 515 million francs—64 million in military aid—which was double the amount provided in 1978.

In January 1981, in view of the developments in Chad, Paris decided to reinforce once again its military contingent in the Central African Republic. A new constitution was proclaimed in February, under which the President is to be elected by popular vote for a term of six years. The President appoints the Prime Minister who is accountable to the parliament and who appoints his cabinet. The National Assembly, which is also popularly elected, has the authority to enact laws and approve the national budget. The judiciary is independent. In presidential elections held in March, Dacko defeated four opposition candidates—Ange Patasse, Abel Goumba, Henri Maidou and Francois Pehoua—to become President.

On April 3, the third government since the overthrow of Bokassa was formed by Premier Simon Narcisse Bozanga, former ambassador and former Minister of Justice in the "imperial government".

Dacko's new government is characterized by the absence of some members of the preceding cabinet, who had shown themselves "timid" in the elections of March 20, in which the official party, the Central African Democratic Union (UDC) won a mere 50.23% of the vote.

On April 2, 1981, the opposition parties set up a Provisional Political Council (CPP), formed by the Ubangi Patriotic Front—the Labour Party (FPO) led by Abel Goumba, the Movement for the Liberation of the Central African People (MLPC) of Ange Patasse, the Independent Reflection Group of Francois Pehoua, and an organization headed by former Vice-Premier Henri Maidou.

Since the overthrow of Bokassa and the seizure of power by Dacko, the FPO has upheld its position of rejecting any dialogue with the new government until it accepted the withdrawal of the French occupation troops and the holding of free and democratic elections.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the two key sectors of the national economy. Agriculture is pursued on 5,900,000 hectares of the total of 27,380,000 hectares and according to FAO figures produced in 1978: 40,000 tons of millet, 133,000 tons of peanuts, 15,000 tons of sesame, 73,000 tons of bananas, 11,000 tons of citrus fruit, 10,000 tons of coffee, 11,000 tons of cotton fibre and 18,000 tons cotton seed, 16,000 tons of rice, 30,000 tons of maize, and 2,000 tons of palm kernels. The 1978 livestock figures included 660,000 head of cattle, 79,000 sheep, 588,000 goats, and 64,000 pigs. The forests produced 2,499,000 cu.m of timber in 1977, and in the same year the fish catch amounted to 130.000 tons.

Industry is essentially light in character, is little developed, and is in the hands of foreign capital. In 1976, it produced 53,000,000 kWh of electric power. The output of the country's principal mineral resource—diamonds—was 297,000 metric carats in 1977, with production centred in the Central African—Arab Society which was under Bokass's direct control.

In the middle of 1978, Bokassa granted to Israeli interests a concession for the prospecting and exploitation of diamonds for export to Israel on an area of 36,000 hectares.

According to available data, in 1978, the country's GNP amounted to 480,000,000 dollars and its per capita GNP to 250 dollars.

The 1977 national budget, amounting to 21,975,000,000 CFA francs, was balanced. the 1978 balance of trade had a surplus of 3,406,000,000 CFA francs (16,182,000,000 CFA francs worth of exports and 12,776,000,000 CFA francs worth of imports. Foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 23,400,000 dollars in 1976. In the same year, the cost-of-living index stood at 188.4% of its 1970 level. The national currency is the CFA franc whose exchange rate was 203.2 per U.S. dollar in February 1980. According to World Bank data, the country's public foreign debt was 63,400,000 dollars in 1975.

The main economic problem of the imperial regime rested in a burdensome public administration apparatus, in the plunder of the country's natural resources by the governing clique, and in the absence of an effective socio-economic policy.

This wrong economic policy was parallelled by the penetration of the country by powerful French interests which dominated, among others, the mining industry and forestry, transportation and the textile industry.

Government: The 1976 constitution established a parliamentary monarchy with Bokassa I as Emperor and with a National Assembly which could be dissolved at the Emperor's will. A Supreme Court also had the duty to arbitrate between the government and the parliament, and to ensure that "public liberties shall be upheld and the public treasury properly managed". The imperial government was overthrown with French assistance by David Dacko in September 1979, and the country, renamed the Central African Republic, got a presidential-type government.

Armed forces: In 1979, the defence of the country was entrusted to some 3,000 troops, of which some 1,400 men had helped the Zairean regime of Mobutu Sese Seko fight the rebellion in Shaba province in the middle of 1978.

Before and after the coup which toppled Bokassa, a true invasion army was sent to the country from France, which included all the services, gendarmerie units, as well as the military adviser who had served in the higher echelons of the armed forces of the Central African Republic ever since its formal indpendence.

As charged by the opposition parties, the military units which were flown from France and occupied the country in 1979 had been called by David Dacko in order to overthrow the "Emperor" who had fallen into disgrace with his former French allies.

Organizations: The Movement for the Social Emancipation of Black Africa (MESAN) was the only political party permitted to exist in Bokassa's Central African Empire. Bokassa was the "President-for-Life" of that organization which was converted into his personal security service. There was also a National Union of Youth associating young people of both sexes.

On April 7 and 8, 1981, the Central African Democratic Union (UDC) held its first congress. It was quickly set up at the beginning of 1980 by David Dacko and under French auspices in order to replace MESAN. It is now the ruling party.

In the parliamentary elections held in 1981, the UDC won the majority of votes, but the opposition denounced the elections and accused Dacko, called "the man of Elysee", of dirty tricks—threats and pressure, theft of ballot boxes, the use of the French occupation

Official name: The Central African Republic.
Area: 623,000 sq.km.
Borders: In the north lies the Republic of Chad, in the east Sudan, in the west Cameroon, and in the south the People's Republic of Congo and Zaire.
Population: 1,908,000 inhabitants in 1978. There are a number of tribal groups with the Banda constituting 47% of the total population and the Baya 27.5%. The annual rate of population growth is 2.09%.
Capital: Bangui.
Principal cities: Berberati, Bossangoa, Bossambele.
Languages: French is the official language. Sango, a national language, is also spoken by the majority of the population.
Public holidays: August 13, Independence Day (1960).
Geography: The Central African Republic is landlocked in the centre of the African continent more than 1,000 km from the nearest coast. It has a large network of such tributaries of the Congo, as the Ubangi and Sangha, 2,820 km of which are navigable. The terrain and the vegetation greatly vary from tropical rain forests in the southwest to a large plateau 600 to 700 m in altitude, which extends to remote mountain ranges along the frontier with Sudan and Chad. The country has favourable conditions for agricultural development.The climate is tropical with two seasons—a rainy one from May to November and a dry one from December to April. In Bangui the median temperature is 35°C and in the north west it is 30°C. In the north—a Sahel type climate—and where there is less rain, the marshes sometime freeze in January and February due to the Harmattan, a cold seasonal wind.
Brief history: The history of the country is closely related with its geographical location in the centre of Africa, where it became a crossroads of different migratory currents which shaped the Central African nationality as an ethnic and linguistic mosaic with its own characteristic features. Since times immemorial its territory had been a centre of African commerce and migrations. Its first contact with European colonization occurred in 1887 when France extended her operations north of the Congo. Two years later the first colonizers settled in the area which is today Bangui, the capital city. Until the 19th century the Arabs had also hunted slaves in the area. The French established themselves in this territory, which they called Oubangui-Chari, in about 1897, and in 1910 brought in workers to cultivate coffee plantations. Uprisings by the Baya tribe were savagely suppressed.

The Ubangi peoples continued to rebel over the next 30 years against the French occupation and against their exploitation by the large concessionary French companies.

From 1911 to 1914 the western and southwestern regions were under German control and then, during World War I, came under French domination.

In the period following World War II, due to the influence of the national liberation movements in other African countries and of a young generation educated in France, some voices emerged in this French colony against foreign domination. This movement made the French permit the formation of a Territorial Assembly as an expression of African interests, and the founding of the Movement for the Social Emancipation of Black Africa (MESAN), led by Barthelemy Boganda. MESAN became in effect a political party.

In 1958, the colony opted for the status of an autonomous republic within the French Community under the name of the Central African Republic. In the same year Boganda became its Prime Minister.

When Boganda died in a suspicious accident on March 29, 1959, he was succeeded in office by his nephew, David Dacko, until then Minister of the Interior. Independence was formally proclaimed in 1960. The Dacko government carried out an openly pre-French policy, which made a section of MESAN disassociate itself from the Dacko line and form the Movement for the Democratic Evolution of Central Africa (MEDAC), more closely identified with the principles promoted by Boganda. MEDAC, led by Abel Goumba, succeeded in winning 11 of the 49 seats in the Legislative Assembly in elections held in September 1960. However, the very same year, on orders of the recently appointed President Dacko, MEDAC was dissolved and its leaders were imprisoned.

On December 31, 1965, a military coup led by Jean Bedel Bokassa overthrew David Dacko. Bokassa, who had been a Captain in the Central African army, promoted himself within a few months to the rank of General and instituted a regime characterized by sudden and constant changes in its foreign policy and by terror and chaos inside the country.

Two major attempts were made to topple Bokassa in 1969 and 1971. In the first case the attempted coup was led by Colonel Alexandre Banza, Minister of Public Health, who was arrested and shot for plotting against Bokassa. In 1971, Auguste M'Bongo, considered the second most important figure in the government, was stripped of his power because he had allegedly tried to stage a coup which was tied to the events of 1969.

Bokassa proclaimed himself President-for-Life of the Central African Republic on March 2, 1972, and appointed himself Marshal in May 1974. In February 1976 he escaped unharmed from an assassination attempt at Bangui airport, staged by a group of officers who were planning another coup.

In April 1976, changes were made in the government, including elimination of the offices of Premier and Vice-Premier, and institution of the President's control of twelve ministerial posts, such as those of defence, public and social affairs, industry and mines, and others. Moreover, Bokassa also held the post of Secretary-General of the country's sole political party. In July 1976, he accused MESAN of having failed to prevent the assassination attempt against him in February and ordered its reconstruction.

This reconstruction resulted in September 1976 in the formation of a Revolutionary Council with Bokassa as its chairman; he gave up his ministerial posts with the proviso that he would personally intervene if a minister showed himself to be incapable or if he rebelled. Bokassa also made himself chairman-for-life of MESAN and commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

In Decemeber 1976, the Central African Republic became the Central African Empire under an "Imperial Constitution" which appointed Bokassa Emperor and empowered him to dissolve the National Assembly, appoint a Prime Minister, determine the country's policy, impose laws, and make appointments in the civil service and the armed forces. He was also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and head of the judiciary. Succession was instituted in the imperial family.

The next year Bokassa had himself crowned as Bokassa I in a sumptious ceremony on which a quarter of the country's resources were spent.

Bokassa owned shares of almost all the national and private enterprises in the country, which permitted him to lead the life of a "modern monarch".

After his visit to France to attend the funeral of General Charles de Gaulee, Bokassa initiated in his foreign policy a progressive improvement of relations with the former metropolitan power, which had greatly deteriorated, and in May 1973 a complete reconciliation took place. France supplied him with budgetary subsidies and financial aid of more than 1,000,000,000 CFA francs in order to dominate the country's commerce.

At the end of 1976, Bokassa visited China and the then Chinese Premier, Hua Kuo Feng, promised him assistance to the value of 10,000,000 dollars. The United States provided him with 800,000 and 475,000 dollars in aid in 1977 and 1978 respectively.

In 1978, Bokassa expressed himself in favour of a pan-African intervention force cham-troops for intimidation of the voters, etc.

The Chairman of the Movement for the Liberation of the People of Central Africa (MLPC), Ange Patasse, accused Dacko of prosecuting a French plan to "liquidate Central African political leaders" by using mercenaries who, he alleged, "are installed in the presidential residence".

On April 2, 1981, a Provisional Political Council was established of representatives of the MLPC, the Ubangui Patriotic Front—Labour Party (FPO), the Independent Reflexion Group, and other organizations opposed to the regime. The Council has described itself as a joint body of coordination, deliberation and decision-making, in which every party maintains its independence and pledges itself "to contribute to the salvation of national peace,unity and independence, defend the democratic principles enunciated in the Constitution, and struggle for respect for individual and collective liberties".

There is also a General Union of Central African Workers (UGTC).

Education and sport: There are no adequate primary schools in rural areas, there is a total absence of secondary schools, and the few schools that do exist in the countryside do not possess even the minimum sanitary facilities.

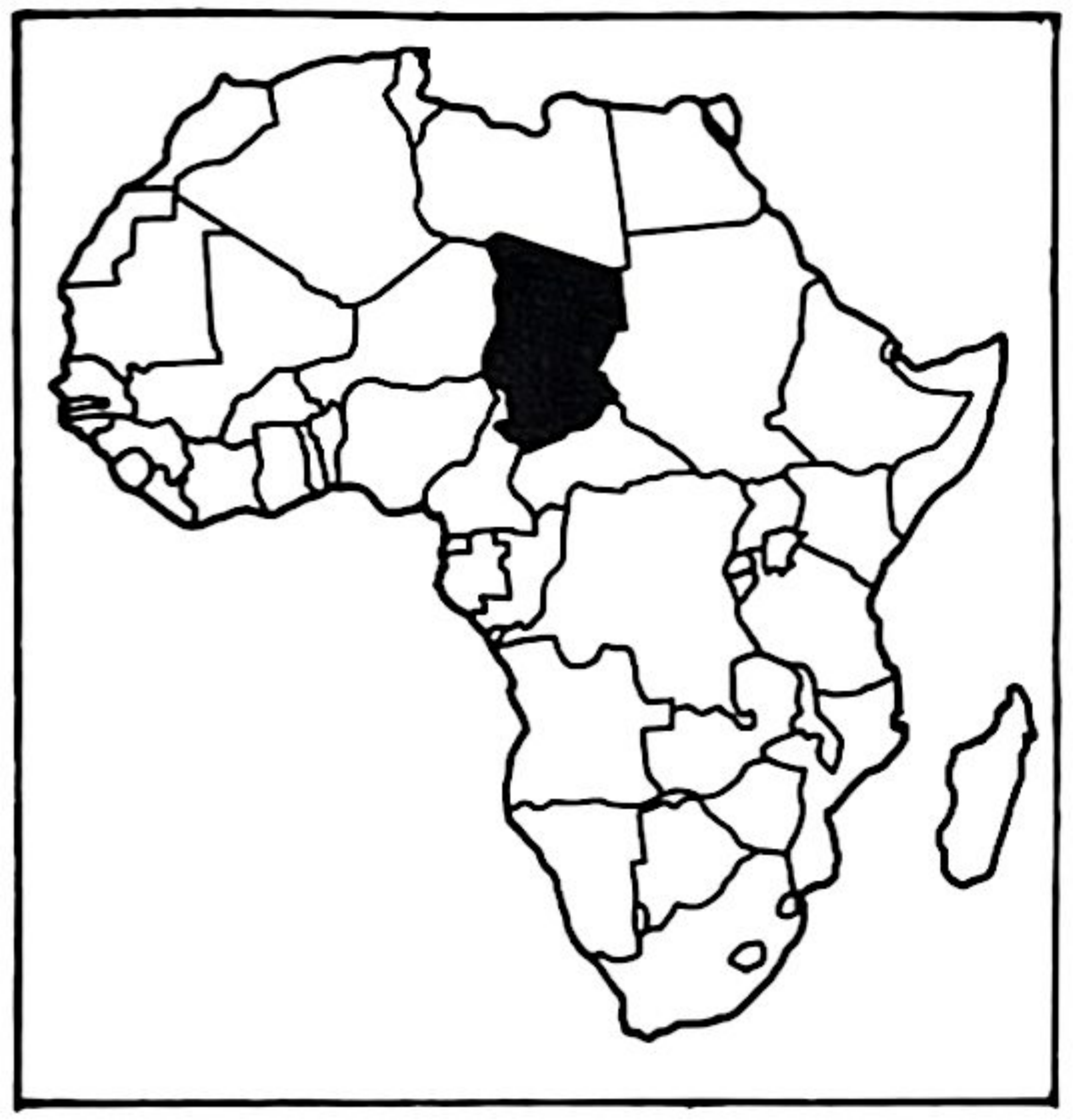
There are only 36 hospitals, 36 maternity wards, 108 social centres and 200 first-aid stations in the country. Local epidemics, together with educational and social factors, are causing a growing exodus of the rural population to urban centres and thus abandonment of the fields and, on the other hand, a rise in prostitution and delinquency.

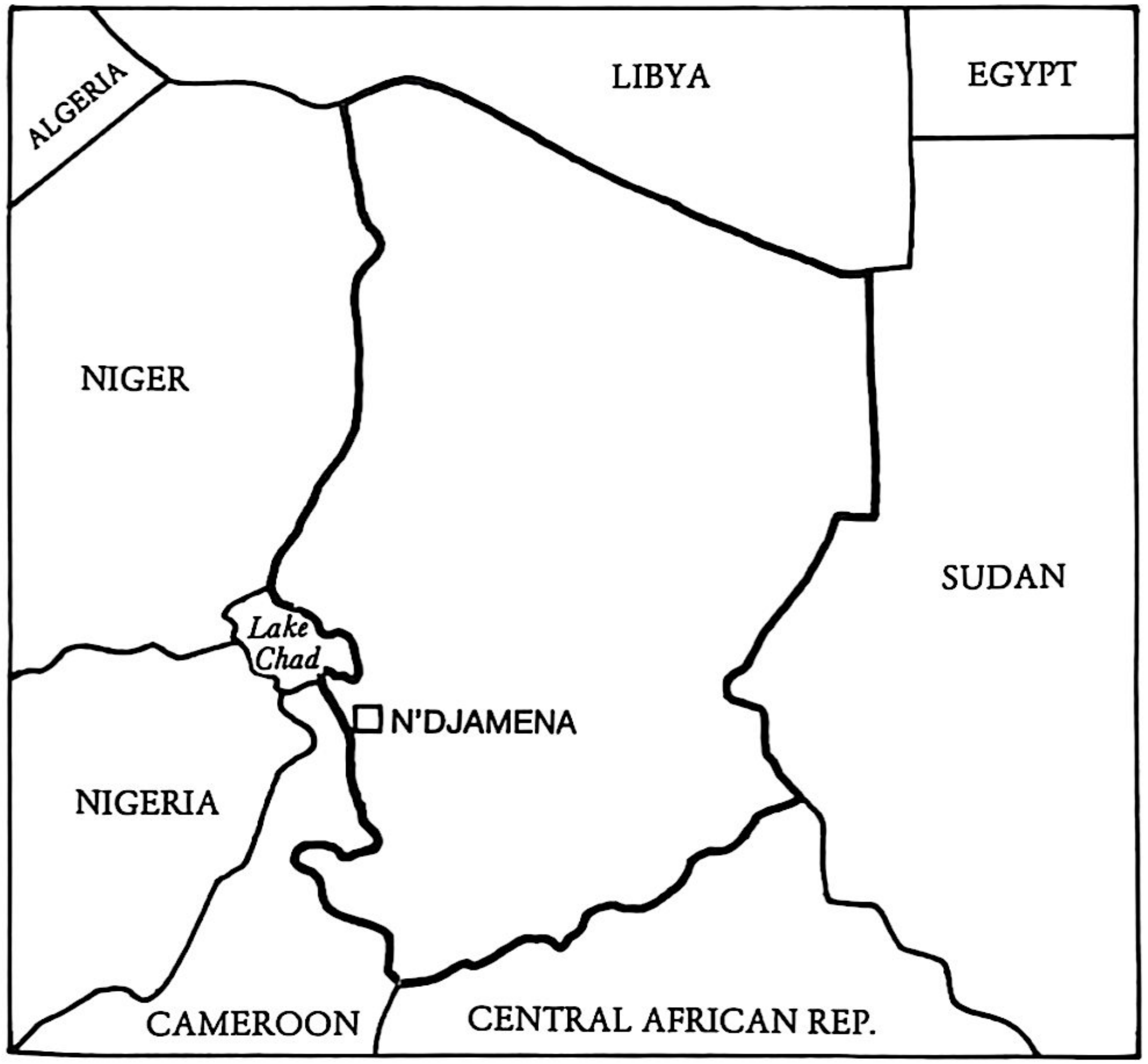
Illiteracy affects 80% of the population. In the 1975-1976 term, there were 221,412 pupils attending primary schools and 23,895 attending secondary schools. There is a university in Bangui, founded in 1970. Higher education was pursued in 1976 by 318 students.

The most popular sport is basketball.

Religion: Christian creeds (principally Roman Catholicism) and Islam are practiced in the Central African Republic in addition to traditional animist cults.

CHAD





Official name: The Republic of Chad.
Area: 1,284,00 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Chad borders on Libya, in the west on Niger, Nigeria and Cameroon, in the south on the Central African Republic, and in the east on Sudan.
Population: 4,405,000 inhabitants in 1979. The annual rate of population growth was 2.2% in 1974. Some twenty different ethnic groups live in the country, the most important among them being the Bagirmi, the Sara, the Kreich, the Teda, the Maba, and the Toubou.
Capital: N'djamene (303,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Sarh, Moundou, Abeche.
Languages: French is the official language. Arabic is spoken in the north and there are, in addition, more than a hundred local dialects.
Public holidays: August 11, Independence Day.
Geography: The lake which has given its name to the country forms most of Chad's western frontier. Chad's territory is mostly a vast high plateau whose most prominent features are to be found at its eastern and western rims and which is surrounded by the deep valleys of the Chari, Logone and Bahr el Ghazal rivers.

The principal mountain ranges extend north of a depression. They include the Ennedi plateau and the volcanic Tibetsi massif where Mt. Emi Koussi rises to 3,145 m. In the east, the Ouadai range continues with the Gueroda chain (1,700 m) and the Abou-Telfane (1,300 m) Being a landlocked country, Chad depends for its economc survival on the Logone and Chari rivers. Its hydrographic network is dominated by Lake Chad, 282 m above sea-level, which has a surface ranging from 10,000 to 25,000 sq.km, depending on the vagaries of the Chari River and on the rate of evaporation. Essentially, Chad owes its life to the Chari and Logone Rivers which are fed by rains falling in the mountains of Cameroon and the Central African Republic.

Chad has two large natural regions. In the north there is the desert of the Saharan region, 500,000 sq km in area and corresponding to the administrative region Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti. In the south there is a tropical zone of 350,000 sq.km—a tree-studded savanna of karites and of tamarinds in the humid parts. This is Chad's most productive region where cotton, peanuts and other crops are grown. The climate is dry and very hot with maximum temperatures of as much as 50°C in N'djamena, the capital.

The rainy season lasts from July to September, while the dry months are November to May.

Brief history: The Sudanese civilization-so named because it had its golden age in Sudan (i.e. the wide belt of savanna extending south of the Sahara from Senegal to the present Republic of Sudan)—was made up of kingdoms whose rulers received divine tribute.

These kingdoms had a more or less centralized political structure which contrasted and were in conflict with the very weak family and tribal institutions of their component parts.

One of these kingdoms, that of Kanem, was founded north of Lake Chad approximately in the 9th century. It was very closely linked with the Kingdom of Bornu on the southern coast of the same lake on the territory of present-day Nigeria, and the two kingdoms maintained very close economic contacts.

The introduction of Islam in the second half of the 11th century was a contributing factor to the merger of the kingdoms in the area, especially under the rule of the Sultan of Oume (1085-1097).

The Arab expansion in North Africa reached the Kingdom of Kanem in the 14th century, when the Arabs occupied its northern part where they settled and deeply influenced the culture of its inhabitants.

The first Europeans arrived in Chad in 1897, when an expedition bound for the Congo with the intent of commercially linking that area with the Mediterranean coast established contacts with the Kingdom of Kanem.

An Anglo-French agreement concluded in 1897 secured French presence in the Chad area, especially in the territories on the northern banks of Lake Chad.

However, the French conquest and colonization of that region were far from easy because the Islamic north, which had achieved a relatively strong religious unity, put up strong resistance.

Thus, it was the southern part of the country, with its humid, tropical climate, which is totally unlike the semi-arid north, and with its considerable natural resources and political fragmentation due to the animistic beliefs practised by its inhabitants, which the French colonialists used as their base.

At the beginning of the second decade of the 20th century, a rebellion by the natives was crushed and the French completed their occupation of the whole territory of Chad.

Like most of the territories of French Equatorial Africa, of which it was a part, Chad did not escape the "war effort" demanded by France of her colonial possessions during World War I. This, of course, resulted in the stepped up exploitation of the country.

When during World War II, in 1940, General de Gaulle proclaimed Free France and announced the resistance against the German occupation of France and against the Nazi Vichy government, Felix Eboue, the black Guyanese who served as the Governor of Chad, proclaimed his support for de Gaulle. One year later, in 1941, de Gaulle appointed Eboue the Governor General of all of French Equatorial Africa.

At the end of the war, new democratic and anti-colonialist ideas emerged in Africa, brought there mostly by the African soldiers who had fought in the war.

African nationalism was greatly spurred by the formation in 1946 of the African Democratic Reunion (RDA), a nationalist organization of a regional character led by Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast.

France tried to block the African nationalist movement with a few minor reforms. Also in 1946, the French government abolished forced labour and the Code on the Indigenous, population imposed on the French colonies some years ago.

In Chad, the nationalist movement gained in strength in 1947 with the formation of the Chad Progressive Party (PPT) led by Gabriel Lisette. The PPT was established as the Chad section of the RDA.

In 1956, the French National Assembly enacted the so-called Framework Law *(Loi-Cadre)*, which granted partial autonomy to French colonial territories. Six years earlier, Houphouet-Boigny, who was the co-author of the law and the chairman of the RDA, broke off his contacts with the French Communist Party and established closer ties with the colonial administration. His break with the French Communists produced a split within the RDA. However, Lisette continued to follow the line set by the Ivory Coast leader.

Under the provisions of the *Loi-Cadre,* Territorial Assemblies were formed in the French colonies. Following the elections of these bodies, Lisette became the head of the first African government of Chad under the auspices of the French Governor who still retained the most important powers and duties of government.

In August 1958, General de Gaulle made a tour of the French possessions in Africa with the objective of explaining his proposed referendum scheme. De. Gaulle, who had been called back to the leadership of his country to avert the collapse of the Fourth Republic, offered the choice of either retaining the status of a colony or of joining a new community of nations headed by France. A few days later, de Gaulle himself announced the possibility of a third choice—independence.

Like most of the French possessions, Chad opted for membership of the French

A new government was formed in Chad in September 1978, headed by Malloum as President and by Hissene Habre—who had been expelled from FROLINAT two years earlier—as Premier. Calling itself the Government of National Unity, it did not include representatives of FROLINAT which continued its struggle.

A tense situation prevailed in the country from the formation of the new government until March 1979. It was characterized by clashes between groups supporting Premier Habre and troops loyal to President Malloum. This crisis evolved into armed clashes in the first half of that month.

The neighbouring countries played an important role in trying to prevent the continuation of the fighting which was taking place mainly in N'Djamena, the capital. A meeting was held in Kano, Nigeria, at the end of February between representatives of the Malloum government and of Premier Habre. On that occasion, agreements were reached on national reunification, but could not be put into effect because the fighting continued until it resulted in the fall of the central government. On April 30, 1979, a new government of national unity was formed under Lol Mohamed Chawwa. Goukouni Oueddei, the leading guerilla commander, was appointed Minister of the Interior, while Hissene Habre took the post of Defence Minister.

Subsequently, violent confrontations and clashes occurred between Oueddei's troops and those of Habre. Under the provisions of an agreement concluded in Lagos in August 1979, a provisional government of national unity (GUNT) was formed in November of that year, headed by Oueddei. Habre retained his post as Defence Minister.

However, the armed clashes between the Armed Forces of the North (FAN) of Habre and Oueddei's People's Armed Forces (FAP) soon resumed—in March 1980. On April 25, Oueddei dismissed Habre. On May 17, 1980, under the firm insistence of the provisional government, the French troops withdrew from Chad. In the meantime, the FAN continued to occupy the Chad capital, receiving logistical support and assistance in troops from Egypt.

On June 15, the provisional government of Goukouni Oueddei signed a treaty of friendship and alliance with Libya. With the solidarity and assistance of that country, forces loyal to the provisional government succeeded in recapturing the capital of N'Djamena on December 14, and four days later the fall of Habre's last stronghold in the town of Abashe was announced.

The Provisional Government of National Unity emerged strengthened from the conference on Chad, which was held in Lagos on December 23 and 24. Lieut. Col. Kamougue, who comes from the south, was named Vice-President. Other cabinet posts were distributed among representatives of different political forces which support the policy of national unity. The developments of 1981 have been characterized by French and Egyptian hostility against Goukouni Oueddei and especially by re-inforcement of the French military presence in the area.

On November 15,1981, at the request of President Gououni Oueddei, all Libyan troops left the Chadian capital of Ndjamena and other towns in the country. Their positions were taken over by soldiers of the African Peacekeeping Force set up by the OAU from military contingents from Nigeria, Guinea, Benin, Togo, Gabon, Senegal and Zaire. Their task is to supervise the "maintenance of peace and order".

Economy: Agriculture and livestock production. Farming activities are pursued on an area of 7,000,000 hectares by 70% of the economically active population, which in 1977 was estimated at 2,000,000 people and which produced according to 1978 FAO figures 580,000 tons of millet and sorghum. 175,000 tons of manioc, 10,000 tons of sesame, 85,000 tons of peanuts, 25,000 tons of dates, 59,000 tons of cotton fibre and 90,000 tons

of cotton seed. Chad produces 60% of the total cotton output of Central Africa. However, its contton production seems to be affected by drought. In addition, Chad produced 88,000 tons of gum Arabic in 1975. Livestock production—mostly nomadic in character—included according to 1978 FAO data 4,012,000 head of cattle, 2,254,000 sheep, 2,254,000 goats, 154,000 horses, 271,000 donkeys, and 405,000 camels. Chads's forests produced 3,778,000 cu.m of timber in 1977. The fishing industry had an estimated catch of 115,000 tons in 1974. The mining industry produces some 10,000 tons of natron annually and there are marketable deposits of uranium and tin oxide in the Tibesti region, of bauxite in western Logone, and of petroleum at Miandoum, where prospecting is being done by foreign companies. Light industry is essentially based on the manufacture of cotton (17,000,000 m in 1976) and production of electric power (54,800,000 kWh). According to World Bank figures, Chad's gross national product was valued at 560 million dollars in 1977 (the forecast for 1978 was 560 million dollars). On December 31, 1975, its external debt amounted to 163,300,000 dollars, while its foreign exchange reserves stood at 13,730,000 dollars in 1978. The balance of trade closed in 1977 with a deficit of 36,200,000 dollars, the result of imports worth 142,200,000 dollars and exports of 106,000,000 dollars. The cost of living index in 1977 had risen to 134.3% compared with its 1975 level. The national currency is the CFA franc whose rate of exchange in February 1980 was 203.2 per U.S. dollar.

Armed forces: In 1977, before the victory of the Provisional Government of National Unity, the army had two infantry batallions and one batallion of engineers. The total size of the armed forces was 5,200 men of whom 200 served in the air force. A paramilitary force had 6,000 men.

France had a military contingent stationed in the country, which was also used for intervention in other African countries.

Organisations: The National Union of Chad Workers (UNATRAT) was founded in 1958 and has some 8,000 members.

After the coup d'etat of April 1975, all of Chad's political parties were banned.

Culture and education: Because of its great ethnic and linguistic diversity, Chad has a valuable cultural heritage. There is a National Museum with a fine collection of ancient and traditional art objects.

The Chad Cultural Centre is trying to stimulate public interest in national traditions.

The level of school attendance is 15%, which is one of the lowest in Africa.

In 1975, there were 192,735 pupils attending primary schools, 10,295 students attended secondary schools in 1974, while 1,210 students were enrolled in higher educational institutions. A National University was established in 1972.

Public health: A large hospital and clinic exist in the capital in addition to secondary hospital facilities in four towns in the interior. There is one doctor for every 48,851 inhabitants (1976) and one hospital bed for every 1,352 inhabitants.

The daily per capita calory intake is 2,060, which is lower than the FAO-recommended 2,300 calories.

Life expectancy is 29 years for men and 35 years for women.

Religion: 52% of the population are Moslems and 43% practise Christian and animist creeds.

Community under the presidency of Charles de Gaulle.

Meanwhile, Moslem objections against the Lisette government undermined the structure of the Chad Progressive Party. Faced with this situation, the PPT leadership appointed Francois Tombalbaye chairman of the party and the head of government.

Opposing the PPT, all the small Moslem parties in Chad united in 1960 to form the African National Party (PNA) under the leadership of Ahmed Koulamallah. On August 11, 1960, France granted Chad its independence.

An idea to unify the four territories of the former French Equatorial Africa—Chad, Gabon, the Central African Republic and the Republic of the Congo—as a Central African Republic had the support of the PPT which emerged from the presidential elections held after the proclamation of independence as the victor with Tombalbaye as its candidate for the presidency.

Nevertheless, one of the potential members of this union, Gabon eventually decided not to join, feeling itself at a disadvantage because its known natural resources were much greater than those of the other countries involved in the scheme.

In 1962, Tombalbaye disbanded all of Chad's political parties except his own, the PPT, which thus became the only legal political organization in the country.

A governmental crisis hit Chad in 1963. The Ministers of State and Justice and the President of the National Assembly were dismissed and detained. Earlier, some minor changes had affected the Tombalbaye government ever since his assumption of power. In 1961, Jean Baptiste, the mayor of Fort Lamy, and Ahmed Kotoko, the President of the National Assembly were dismissed.

Several days after the dismissal of the Ministers, on March 27, 1963, Tombalbaye dissolved the National Assembly and some time later, Abo Nassour and Ali Kosso, the dismissed Ministers of State and of Justice respectively, were sentenced to death and executed in July of that year.

Nevertheless, the governmental crisis persisted until September 1963, when the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Djbrine Kerallah, and former Prime Minister Ahmed Koulamasllah were arrested.

Chad's northern region, which had remained under French military control, passed in 1965 under the military control of the Chad government. This brought about an intensification of the policy of discrimination against the Moslem minority, pursued by the government ever since the proclamation of independence.

The religious differences between the Moslem north and the animist-Christian south had been exploited by the French colonialists for the purpose of blocking an anti-colonialist movement of national unity. Similarly, the Tombalbaye government spurred these differences in order to disorient the opposition against his government and to distract public opinion.

After the Chad army had suppressed the protesting population of Mangualme, a struggle began against the Tombalbaye government and against the French policy of intervention.

Two organizations which had been dissolved by Tombalbaye in the past—the Chad National Union and the Chad Liberation Front—united on June 22, 1966, and formed the Chad National Liberation Front (FROLINAT).

FROLINAT's political platform was based on struggle against neo-colonialism throughout Chad and on the establishment, after victory, of a national coalition government which would put into effect a thorough agrarian reform and would evict all French military bases from Chad.

The struggle launched by FROLINAT gained in strength and new areas of guerilla operations were opened. The guerilla combat operations were coordinated through two

High Commands, one in the central part of the country, the other in the north.

The discovery in 1967 of large deposits of uranium, tungsten, vanadium, copper and other minerals attracted the attention of the government in Paris, which tightened its grip on Chad. In May 1968, French troops entered the country to help the national army control the FROLINAT insurgency and to secure French economic interests.

In April 1971, an attempt was made for what was called a "democratic opening" with the objective of neutralizing FROLINAT's struggle. Many political prisoners were released and a new cabinet, half of whose members were Moslems, was appointed. In addition, some French troops left the country.

Nevertheless, the struggle continued. On April 12, 1972, three months after the visit to Chad by French President Georges Pompidou, The Tombalbaye government re-established diplomatic relations with Libya, which after the victory of its revolution pursued a policy of solidarity with FROLINAT.

Abroad, the opposition to the Tombalbaye government united in the Chad Democratic Revolutionary Movement, founded in 1973 under the leadership of Dulet Bono, Chad's former Minister of Public Health. However, Bono was assassinated in Paris, the headquarters of the movement, on August 26 of the same year.

General Felix Malloum, the Commander-in-Chief of the Chad armed forces, was arrested in June 1973 and placed under house detention on charges of attempting a coup.

The ruling party, the PPT, was replaced on August 27, 1973, by the National Movement for Cultural and Social Revolution (MNRCS) again under Tombalbaye's leadership.

A policy of "Chad Identity", similar to that pursued in Zaire by Mobutu Sese Seko, was launched by Tombalbaye who changed his name from Francois to the African N'Garta, and the name of the capital, from Fort Lamy, to N'Djamena.

The economic and political crisis of the Tombalbaye government reached alarming proportions in 1975. A drought scorched the country and the entire crop was lost that year, producing large-scale famine. On April 13, 1975, a group of Chad army officers overthrew President Tombalbaye and replaced him by a military government. The putschists, led by General Felix Malloum, called for a policy of national reconstruction and of a new economic orientation.

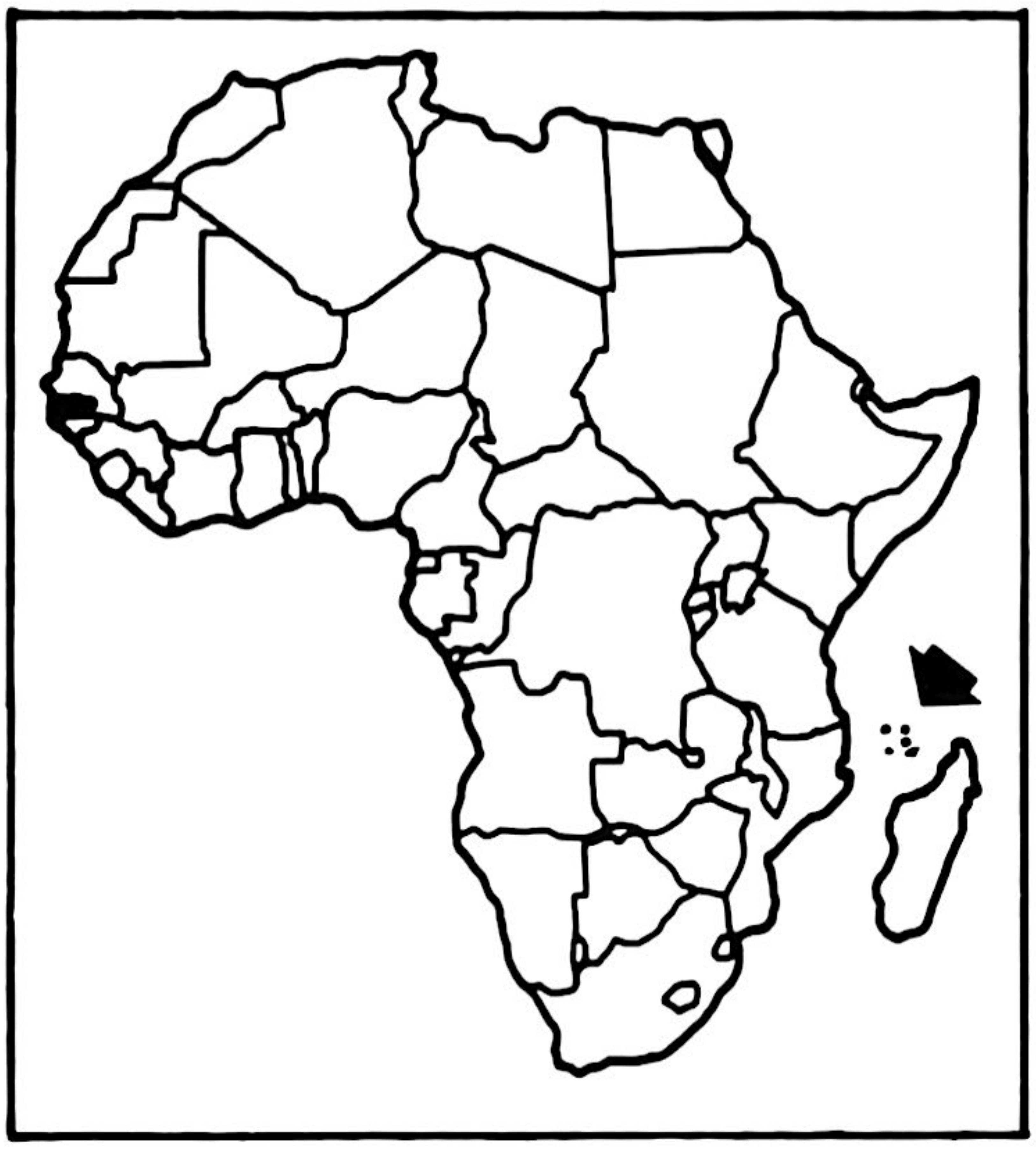
However, very soon the new government had to face a situation similar to what the overthown government had to cope with. The FROLINAT struggle intensified and launched offensive operations. Confronted by this development, the Malloum government asked France for military assistance.

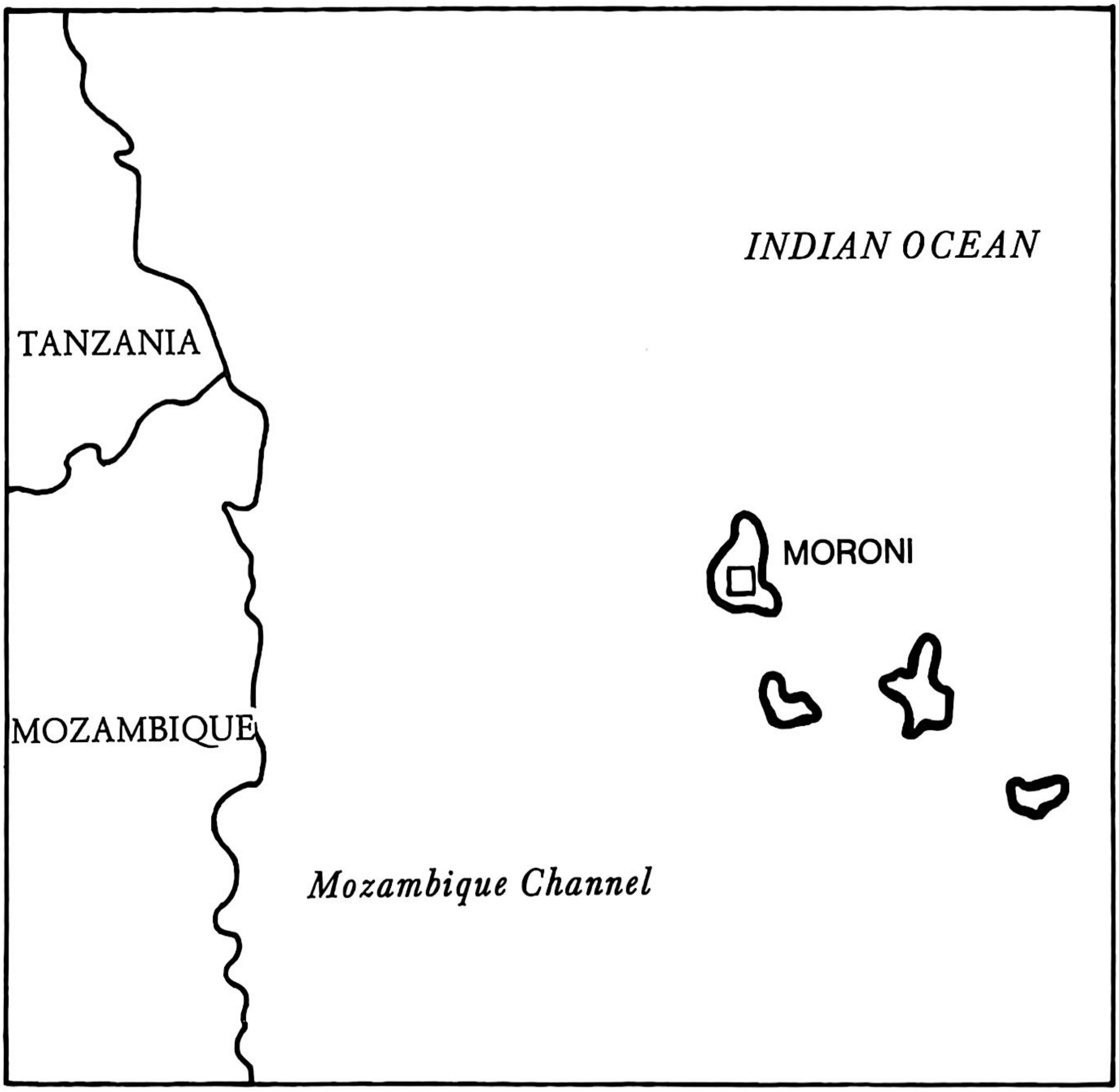
In October 1976, Hissene Habre, the head of FROLINAT's Second Army in the north of the country, was dismissed. He had gained notoriety by his abduction of French archaeologist Francoise Claustre, and after his dismissal he formed a new army from his followers and made approaches to the Malloum government.

A meeting in Benghazi of representatives of the Malloum government, of FROLINAT —Goukouwi Oveddei's faction—and of Libya and Nigeria tried to produce a solution of the Chad problem. On that occasion—in March 1978—FROLINAT demanded the formation of a government in which it would be represented, as well as the withdrawal of French and Egyptian troops from the country. But the refusal of the Chad government to accept these demands provoked the outbreak of new hostilities.

In the middle of 1978, a FROLINAT commission was formed, headed by Hissene Habre's group, for the purpose of producing an agreement on ending the hostilities and on the introduction of some reforms in the country. This attempt, which was mediated by the Sudanese government, resulted in the adoption of a constitution which provided for the institutional make-up of the country.

COMOROS




INDIAN OCEAN
TANZANIA
MORONI
MOZAMBIQUE
Mozambique Channel

Official name: The Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros.
Area: 2,236 sq.km.
Borders: The Comoros archipelago lies in the Indian Ocean off the East African coast.
Population: 343,200 inhabitants (1978 estimate). The annual rate of population growth in the period 1970-1977 was 3.8%.
Capital: Moroni (on Njazidja).
Principal islands: Njazidja (formerly Grande-Comoro), Nzwani (formerly Anjouan), Mwali (the former Moheli), and Mahore (the former Mayotte).
Languages: Swahili is the official language. French and Arabic are also spoken.
Public holidays: July 6, Independence Day.
Geography: Because of their location at the entrance to the Mozambique Channel and between Madagascar and the Tanzanian coast, the Comoro Islands are a strategic point in the Indian Ocean. The islands are of volcanic origin and the principal ones are Njazidja (1,148 sq.km and 164,000 inhabitants), Nzwani (424 sq.km and 123,000 inhabitants), Mwali (290 sq.km. and 13,200 inhabitants) and Mahore (374 sq.km and 43,000 inhabitants); the others are small islets and reefs. The islands' topography is mountainous and the highest elevation, Mt. Kartala (2,475 m), on Njazidja is an active volcano. The climate is tropical with a rainy and a dry season. Njazidja has no source of potable water, but humidity is extremely high and with the rich volcanic soil feeds an exuberant vegetation.

The Comoros lie on the route of the giant tankers taking petroleum from the Arabian-Persian Gulf to the industrialized capitalist countries.

Brief history: The Comoro Islands had been known since Antiquity. Arabs settled there in the 15th century and founded a number of ruling dynasties. A century later, the Portugese, the French, the Dutch and the British began to besiege the islands and the latter seized them temporarily in 1591. In this period, too, invaders from neighbouring Madagascar began to arrive there.

At the beginning of the 19th century, a Sultan ruled each of the four principal islands until the Sultan of Anjouan also seized Moheli and Mayotte.

A rebellion on the island of Mayotte was exploited by the Malagasy Sultan Andriatsoli to seize it. This situaton was, in turn, exploited by French colonialists for signing treaties of protection with some local chiefs to the detriment of others, and subsequently for establishing their domination of the islands by militarily defeating those Sultans who opposed their plans.

The French occupied Mayotte in 1843, and acquired the other islands between 1866 and 1909 by treaties of protection or by force.

Grande-Comoro, Aljouan, Mayotte and Moheli became French territory, the status of which was slightly modified in 1912, when the islands were joined to another French possession, Madagascar.

It was only after World War II, when the French government again separated the Comoros from Madagascar. In 1961 they were granted internal autonomy and seven years later a certain degree of self-determination, although in effect power continued to be held over them by the metropolis through a French High Commissioner stationed there. France continued to control the islands' defence and security, justice, commerce, foreign relations, finances, transport, communications and public information facilities, and also retained the right to proclaim a state of emergency. The islanders were permitted to administer public sanitation, primary education and less important matters of local government.

The Movement for the National Liberation of the Comoros (MOLINACO), founded in 1962, enjoyed from the very beginning broad popular support. Persecuted by the French, who forced it to operate underground, MOLINACO found it necessary to organize the Evolution Party as its legal expression.

Ten years later elections were held for a Chamber of Deputies, in which Prince Said Ibrahim, a former member of the French National Assembly for the Comoros and the head of the Government Council from 1970-1972, championed the *status quo.*

The country's deplorable situation, manifested in a general stagnation of the economy both in production and in job opportunities, a lack of educational and public health facilities, and other shortcomings, spurred the formation of nationalist groups demanding basic structural changes.

These groups established a number of organizations, including Unity (pro-government) and such opposition parties as the People's Democratic Grouping, the Democratic Union, the Socialist Party, and the Evolution Party, which called for the islands' complete independence.

Marcel Henry, a former Comoros representative in the French Economic and Social Council and a well-known landlord, demanded that the future of Mayotte should be determined separately.

The French authorities supported the Mayotte separatists under the pretext of acceding to popular wishes expressed through Henry. This argument lacked historical and legal validity because there is only a single people inhabiting the Comoros and united by close economic, historical and cultural ties.

The United National Front, made up of the Evolution Party and the local Socialist Party, urged the metropolitan power to hold a plebiscite in 1974, which demonstrated that the overwhelming majority of the islanders wanted the complete independence of the Comoros. The count was 154,184 votes (i.e. 94.56%) for independence and 8,854 votes against.

From the very beginning, French colonialism schemed to divide the Comoros and thus the plebiscite was held on only three of the islands. A separate referendum was organized on Mayotte and, according to the report of the colonial government, the majority of voters favoured the maintenance of colonial ties with France.

The Mahore Popular Movement, led by the landlord Marcel Henry, took advantage of the situation to assert that Mayotte wanted to "continue being French".

Paris supported the secession of Mayotte in order to maintain its military presence in the Indian Ocean in flagrant violation of an earlier promise to respect the territorial integrity of the islands and the expression of the people's will.

In October 1976, the U.N. General Assembly passed a resolution condemning French policy on the Comoro Islands and the intention to seperate Mayotte from the other islands. This resolution declared null and void the referendum of February 8. 1976, whereby— according to the government in Paris— the inhabitants of Mayotte had decided to maintain their colonial ties with France and to keep themselves separated from the rest of the islands.

On July 6, 1975, Ahmed Abdallah unilaterally proclaimed the independence of Grand-Comoro, Anjouan and Moheli, and instituted his government on the three islands. Abdallah, who had succeeded Said Ibrahim as president of the Government Council, had been elected member of the French Union in 1953 and Senator in 1959, and became president of the Comoro Government Council in 1972 with the support of the Party for the Unity and Independence of the Comoros (PUIC).

The new head of state had anticipated by several months the date set by Paris which intended to proclaim the independence of the entire archipelago on the eve of legislative elections in keeping with the neo-colonialist tradition.

The premature proclamation of independence by Abdallah encouraged the policy of a group of French parliamentarians, headed by Michel Debre and Jacques Soustelle, who demanded the secession of Mayotte.

The Progressive forces accused Aballah of precipitating the course of events by his excessive politial ambitions aimed at gaining credit for an independence of which he was neither the forger not the true defender.

In his first speech as head of state, Abdallah declared: "I am telling the foreigners that they can still feel at home here." This was an open allusion to the French who, however, did not share the same sentiments and transferred all their troops and military equipment to Mayotte.

Thus, the "Islands of Scents", named so because of their important production of spices, scents and vanilla, found themselves dismembered.

About a month after the unilateral proclamation of independence, the Abdallah government was overthrown and the presidency was assumed on August 3, 1975, by Ali Soilih.

This change provoked hostile moves by France which began to block the importation of some basic products by the islands. In spite of the French blockade, the Soilih government launched some radical changes in the Comoros' society, which in the initial stage—from January to Augus 1976—aimed at the consolidation of the state. The objective was to maintain the system of public administration following the rapid withdrawal of most French economic and technical assistance.

The second stage of the process of transformation—from August 1976 to June 1977—involved a struggle against feudal practices through a reform of the local customs, through a reform of the local customs, championed by the country's youth.

The response to all these government measures against the existing structure of society was a campaign waged by the French from the occupied island of Mayotte, which took the form of eleven attempted coups.

Under the Soilih government, the Comoros played an outstanding role in the Fourth Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, where their delegates joined other Third World countries and the socialist states in voting in favour of the resolutions passed by that committee.

The Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros was admitted to the United Nations Organization in 1975 and has been a member of the Organization of African Unity and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

In March 1977, after the failure of an invasion which was to have been accompanied by a revolt on Njazidja, President Soilih demanded the withdrawal of French troops based on Mahore from where all provocations had been staged, and pointed to the fact that on that island there was one French soldier for every three inhabitants, while French warplanes were constantly violating the air space of the Republic.

A plot was discovered in the capital of Moroni in January 1978, rusulting in many arrests. The next month, more than 100 inhabitants of Nzwani fled to Mahore from where French ships and planes took them to France. They included many members of the family of Ahmed Abdallah and a former member of the French National Assembly for the Comoros, Said Ali Mohamed. In March, serious disturbances broke out in the village of Inconi on Njazidja, in which a number of people were killed. In the same month the French vested interests and media published statements that the situation on the islands was ripe for a change. And, indeed, after a rightist victory in the French parliamentary elections, a coup d'etat was carried out in the Comoros.

It happened at dawn on May 13, 1978, and was effected by a so-called Clandestine Liberation Force made up of French Foreign Legion soldiers dressed in plain clothes and some fifty mercenaries led by the Frenchman Robert Denard, an individual well known for his adventurous activities in Africa, which—according to Parisian sources—had been financed by the French Service of Foreign Documentation and Counter-intelligence (SDECE) and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency.

The putschist directorate formed after May 13, 1978, had President Soilih assassinated by applying the provisions of the Fugitive Law and rewarded Denard by appointing him commander-in-chief of the armed forces and the police as well as member of the political and military committee ruling the country. In the Comoros, Denard used the name Said Mustafa Mahjub.

In the first half of June, Ahmed Abdallh and Mohamed Ahmed returned to the islands to act as co-presidents of the directorate.

Ahmed Abdallah is considered to be the richest man in the country. He owns many commercial interests on Nzwani (the former Anjouan), including a monopoly on rice imports to the four islands since the colonization period.

The coup carried out by mercenaries under a French trade-mark had its repercussions in July 1978 at the OAU summit conference in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum. The African heads of state excluded the Comoran delegation from their deliberations.

The new regime installed in Moroni immediately expressed its wishes to effect a reconciliation with Paris. In the first half of June 1978, the two co-presidents of the directorate, Ahmed Abdallah and Mohamed Hamed, went to France together with Foreign Minister Ali Mroudjas and were received by Olivier Stirn, the French Secretary of State for Foreign Relations.

On September 27, 1978, as a result of African and world public opinion, the mercenary commander-in-chief of the armed forces and police, Robert Denard, was dismissed. The Comoros government declared that his mission had ended and sent him away with full honours.

A referendum held in October 1978 approved a new constitution. A few days later Abdallah was elected President of the Republic. In the same month, Abdallah went to France to sign new cooperation agreements, and a month later the first Comoran ambassador to France arrived in Paris. A new government was formed at the end of the year, headed by Prime Minister Salim Ben Ali. On February 26, 1979, the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros was re-admitted to the Organization of African Unity.

At the end of the 1970s, the Comoran government received important financial assistance from Kuwait, Oman and Saudi Arabia.

The non-aligned countries and the socialist states, just as all progressive countries in the world continue supporting the just aspirations of the people of the Comoros, who demand respect of their territorial integrity and sovereignty, being violated by the French by their continued control of Mahore Island.

Economy: The economy of the Comoros is dominated by agriculture which is under the control of French firms. 75% of the islands' cultivable area (90,000 hectares is in the hands of large estate owners. According to 1978 FAO data, the Comoros produce 16,000 tons of rice, 5,000 tons of maize, 85,000 tons of manioc, 14,000 tons of sweet potatoes, 60,000 tons of coconuts and 4,000 tons of copra in addition to spices and vanilla. Artisan production specializes in the manufacture of essential oils for the French perfume industry. The Comoros are the world's foremost producer of the Ylang-Ylang essence (100 tons in 1975) and the second leading producer (after Madagascar) of vanilla (200 tons in 1975).

According to the same FAO data for 1978, the islands have some 76,000 head of cattle, 84,000 goats and 8,000 sheep.

As shown by available figures, the gross national product of the Comoros in 1977 amounted to 70,000,000 dollars. In the same year their balance of trade (exclusive of

Mahore) closed with a deficit due to 4,055,000,000 CFA francs of imports and 2,205,000,000 francs of exports. The national currency is the CFA franc whose rate of exchange in February 1980 was 203.2 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The directorate which seized power in May 1978 established an Islamic Federal Republic in which every island is to be autonomous under an administrative system subjected to feudal elements. The system of government is of the presidential type.

Armed forces: There is a regional police force and a federal army of some 500 men. The French mercenary Robert Denard reorganized the federal army after the coup of May 1978.

Organizations: There are several political organizations on the islands, some of them deactivated after the 1978 coup. The most active organizations are the United National Front which has always had close ties with France, the Mahore Movement Party, which wants the island to become a French Overseas Department, the Movement for the National Liberation of the Comoros (MOLINACO), which has its headquarters in Tanzania and which had been outlawed before independence, the Socialist Party, and the Front for the National Liberation of the Comoros (FROLINACO), founded in June 1978, which is opposed to the government and which asserts that those who had provoked the overthrow of President Soilih merely want to perpetuate the neo-colonial domination of the islands, to restrict their independence, and to secure imperialist presence in this strategically important area.

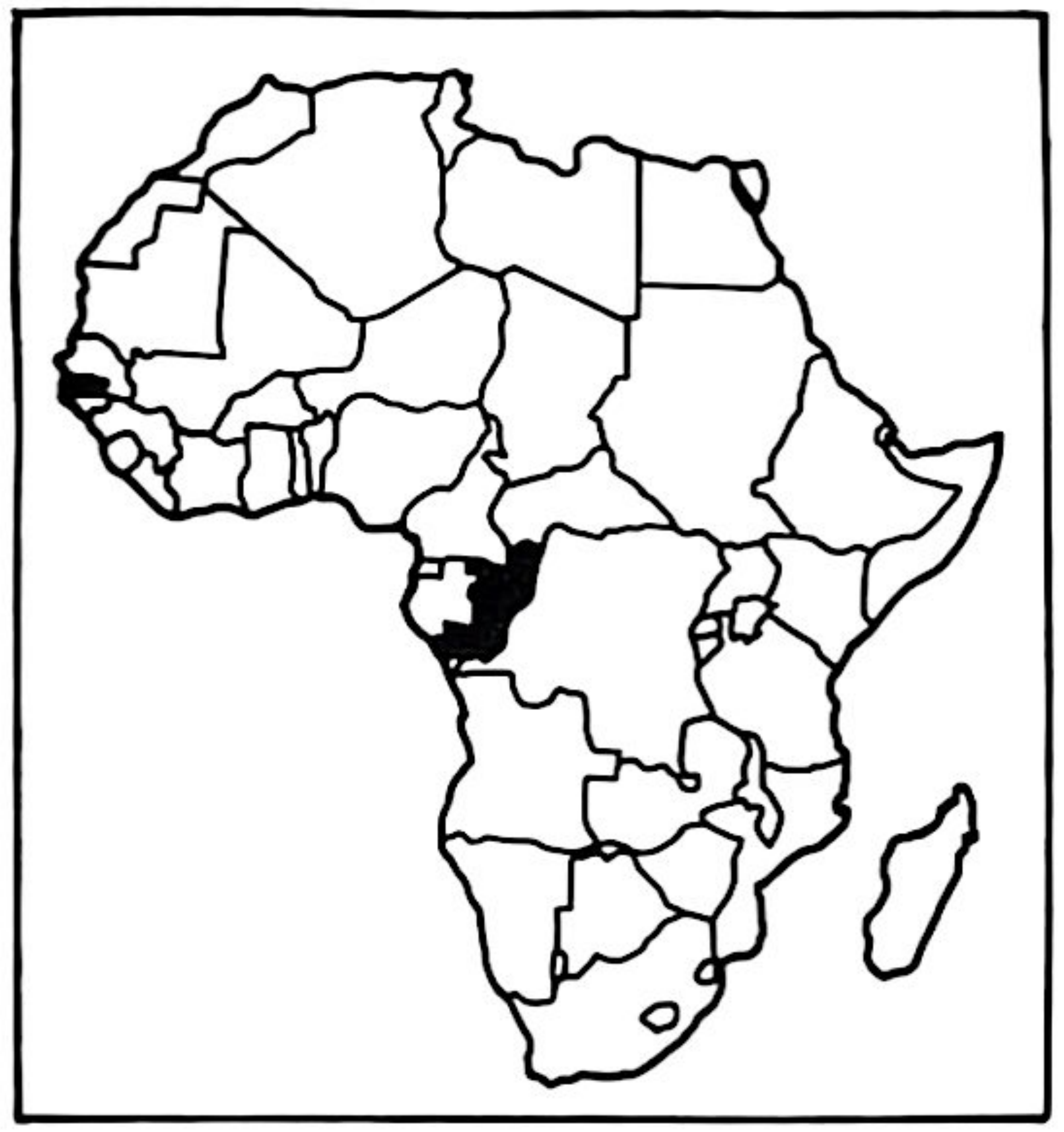
Education and sports: More than 70% of the population are illiterate according to statistics from the period 1973-1974. Prior to the 1978 coup, all the French teachers had been recalled from the islands with the exception of Mahore. Subsequently they began to return gradually.

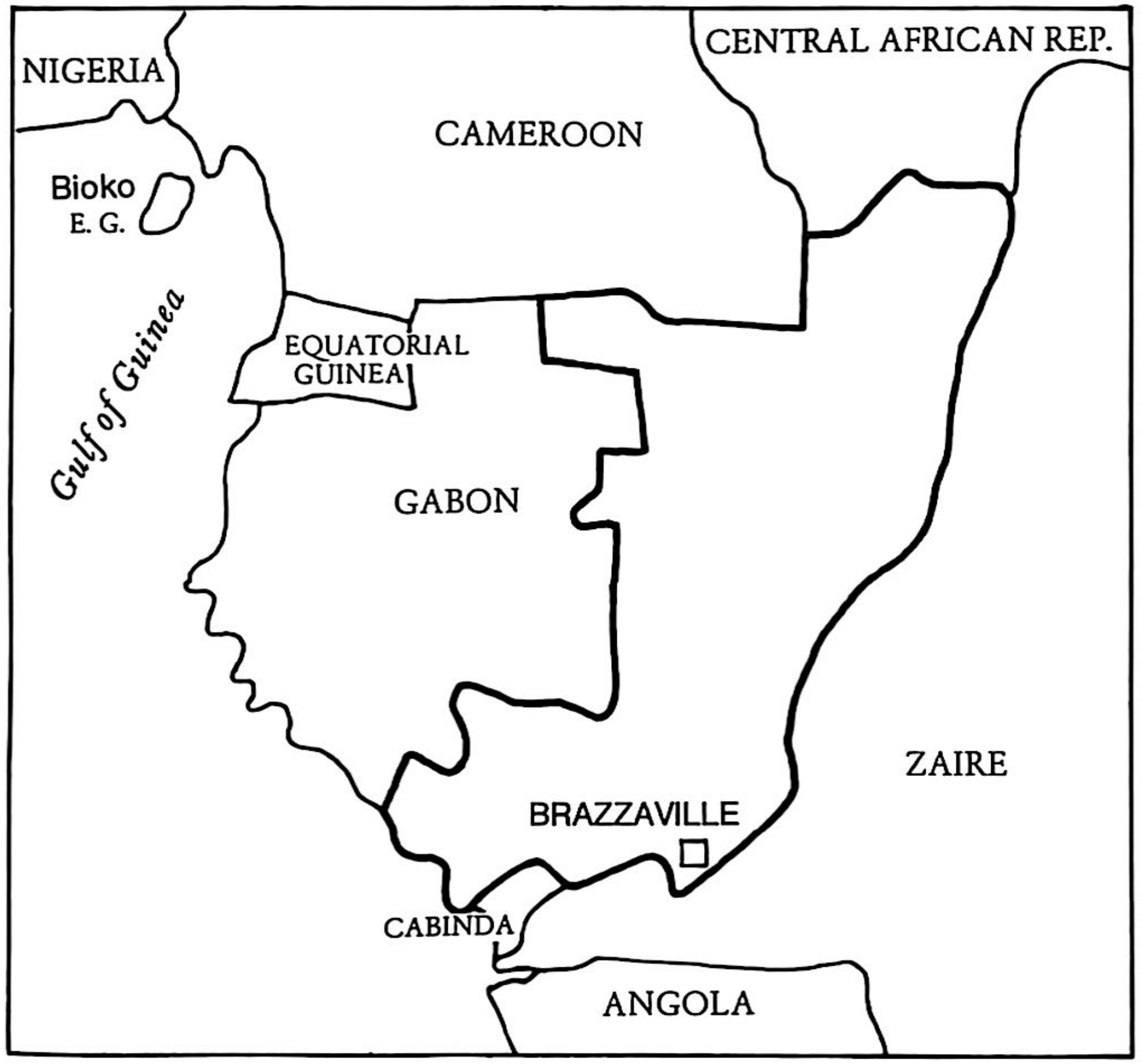
Football is the most popular sport in the Comoros.

Public health: There is one doctor for every 25,000 inhabitants (1975) and there are three hospitals on the islands. Also in 1975, the average life expectancy of men was 41 years and of women 44 years.

Religion: The majority of the population are Moslems. There is a Roman Catholic minority concentrated on Mahore.

CONGO





methods of colonization, but in actual practice any tribe resisting the foreign presence was exterminated. In 1881, Brazza was appointed General Commissioner and all the conquered lands, from Gabon to the Congo, were placed under his authority in 1883, after important reforms had been effected in the system of colonization, including extended powers of the governors. In 1885, at the Berlin Conference, the European powers acknowledged the French colonial domination of this vast region named French Equatorial Africa.

Between 1886 and 1888, Gabon and the Congo were separated, each of them getting their own administrative and financial control. This new entity was given the name the French Congo (or Central Congo) under a decree dated April 30, 1891, which remained in effect until 1910. Three years later the Congo was again divided and was left with the territory of Oubangui, which was governed separately until 1897. Between 1898 and 1900, the French Congo was divided up among 40 concessionary firms which were guaranteed for a period of 30 years the tenure of land and its exploitation—with the exception of mineral extraction—in exchange for 15% tax on their annual profits. When this fiscal sytem was established in 1902, the situation of the native population grew from bad to worse as it was exploited and deprived of a share of the enormous profits made by the Europeans. In the same year the French government sent Savorgnana de Brazza to investigate the situation in the French colonies on Africa's Atlantic coast, but he died in Dakar, Senegal, in 1905. In 1910, the companies which were running up deficits were permitted to regroup and a stricter system of regulation was instituted with respect to concessions granted by the French government. However, the native population continued to be dispossessed of their lands and monopoly exploitation began of the colony's forestry resources, especially in the Biari Valley, as well as of the mineral resources, copper in particular.

In 1911, following the Agadir incident, France and Germany signed an agreement on a division of their colonial territories. The French lost 242 square miles of their Equatorial Africa, which, however, they reconquered during World War I. In that period the native population rebelled on a number of occasions against the taxation system, forced labour and requisitioning by the French colonial administration.

The construction of a railway line linking Brazzaville with the port of Pointe-Noire in the extreme south of the colony took ten years and cost the lives of thousands of African workers who perished under inhuman living and working conditions. The railway, known as Congo-Ocean, was completed in 1934 and opened a new stage in the development of the country by encouraging commercial shipping through the port of Pointe-Noire; its strategic importance as a commercial artery for all of Central Africa has been preserved to this day.

After the armistice of 1940, French Equatorial Africa and Cameroon joined Free France and Brazzaville became the seat of the Council for the Defence of the Realm and of the High Commission for Free French Africa, headed by General Charles de Gaulle.

In 1944, as a result of the Brazzaville Conference, the metropolitan power for the first time allowed native inhabitants to participate in local government due to growing popular discontent expressed in constant disturbances and revolts in the main urban areas.

The Congo was one of the French colonies to vote "yes" in the referendum held by General de Gaulle in 1958 within the framework of the *Loi Cadre* (passed by the French National Assembly in 1956 and providing for partial autonomy of the colonies. Only Ahmed Sekou Toure, the leader of the Democratic Party of Guinea, said "no" and demanded that his country should be granted independence.

Under the *Loi Cadre*—the Framework Law—the Congolese could vote within the scope of a system outlined by the colonialists and based on the division of the electorate among three political parties, essentially of tribal character: the African Socialist Movement (MSA), led by Jacques Opangaul and associating the northerners, the Congolese Progressive Party (PPC), led by Felix Tchikaya and associating the inhabitants of the south, and the Democratic Union for the Defence of African Independence (UDDIA) headed by Foulbert Youlou and representing the highland tribes, the Bakongo in particular.

Youlou's political character became quite obvious in 1956, when some European sectors built around him the myth of a Black African Messiah. Youlou's rising career was launched in the same year, when he was made the mayor of Brazzaville, from which position he fully exploited the Matswani electorate against Opangaul's African Socialist Movement.

After the referendum of 1958 Youlou was appointed Prime Minister, even though his party was in the minority in the Legislative Assembly.

The next year, a tribal conflict erupted in Brazzaville between members of the northern tribes, inhabiting the Poto-Poto quarter, and members of the southern, Balari and Bakongo tribes, living in the Bakongo quarter of the capital. The clashes claimed 1,000 dead.

This conflict well expressed the relationship existing between the MSA and UDDIA parties, and was used as a pretext for the arrest of Opangault, which eliminated him from the electoral competition as Youlou's opponent.

Christian Jayle, the president of the Congolese Assembly on the eve of the proclamation of the Republic and former adviser of the colonial government, was chosen to carry out the French decision to install Youlou in power in the former colony.

For this purpose, Youlou was presented as successor of the Congolese patriot Andre Matswa, a dedicated fighter for nationalist and anti-colonialist demands in the early 1940s. Matswa died in Chad in 1942, where he was imprisoned for his unceasing anti-colonialist activities and promotion of trade-unionism.

Youlou's appointment to the premiership concluded negotiations conducted between France, tribal elements and Congolese feudal groups, aimed at securing power for their representatives.

It was in this atmosphere, that the Congo obtained its formal independence from France on August 15, 1960, following a long period of political agitation, and was called the Republic of the Congo—Brazzaville. Although formally independent, the new republic in fact became a part of the legal and institutional system of French neo-colonialism. It got its independence in a favourable historical situation which prompted France to alter her system of exploitation on the African continent.

Three years after independence a popular uprising swept the country on August 13, 14 and 15, 1963, dates which entered Congolese history as "the three glorious days" that led to the resignation of President Youlou. Youlou's fall was due to action by trade unionists and politically conscious youth, who sparked a broad protest movement against the subservient rule of the first post-independence government.

On August 15, after a general crisis had seized the country's principal towns and after Youlou had failed in his attempt to check it by direct armed intervention by French troops stationed in the Congo, the government of Abbe Youlou had to resign. A few months later, on December 8, a National Revolutionary Council was formed.

A new government was constituted on the same day and its leadership was entrusted to Alphonse Massemba Debat, a Protestant professor and graduate of the West African School for Higher Officials, who was a former supporter of Youlou, but who had resigned as Minister of Planning and Supplies in January 1963 in protest against Youlou's policies.

In July 1964, the National Movement of the Revolution (MNR) held its constituent congress which chose the road of scientific socialism for the country's development. This was a victory for the progressive and socialist forces which had succeeded in asserting themselves within the MNR, a heterogeneous political organization.

Official name: The People's Republic of the Congo.
Area: 342,000 sq.km.
Borders: In the west the Congo borders on Gabon, in the north on Cameroon and the Central African Republic, in the east and south on Zaire, and in the southwest on Angola (Cabinda) and the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 1,424,000 inhabitants in 1977. The annual rate of population growth is 2.42%. The population is predominantly made up of Bantu peoples who form four major tribal groups—the Kongo (45%), the Te Ke (20%), the Boubangui (16%), and the Gabones (15%). In the north lives the Sangha ethnic group.
Capital: Brazzaville.
Principal cities: Pointe Noire, Kayie, and Louboumo.
Languages: French is the official language, while the main native languages are Lingala and Kikongo.
Public holidays: May 1, International Labour Day; June 22, the People's Army Day; December 31, Foundation of the Congolese Labour Party (PCT) and Proclamation of the People's Republic.
Geography: The Congo lies astride the Equator on the central-western coast of Africa. It is on that 160 km-long coast where the port city of Porte Noire is located, an important commercial centre through which pass the products of Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, the Central African republic and the Congo itself. A railway links Pointe Noire with the capital of Brazzaville, itself an important port on the Congo River which with its tributaries, navigable for medium-sized vessels, form a communication network for the vast area of Central Africa.

The coast is mostly sandy from the mouth of the Kouilou River to the north, while to the south are marshes, sand banks and many salt-water lagoons, formed by the Atlantic Ocean's Benguela Current.

Towards the interior, the terrain gradually rises to form a plateau some 65 km wide on the average, but with the maximum width of 161 km, which touches on Gabon on one side and on Cabinda on the other. The Mayombe Highlands form a range whose nucleus is made up of crystalline rock and which runs parallel with the coastline. A number of high escarpments are separated by deep valleys formed by the eroding influence of rivers. In the south, Mt. Bamba is 800 m high and Mt. Foungouti 930 m. The elevations in the northern part of the country are lower, with the highest of them, Mt. Meguindou standing 650 m above sea level. To the east of the Mayombe Highlands lies a depression formed by the valley of the Niari River, while to the north the land gradually rises to the Chaillu Plateau, near the Gabon frontier, whose elevation varies from 485 to 610 m. In the south, the Niari depression rises to form the Plateau of the Cataracts. Farther beyond the Niari River valley there are table lands some 490 m in altitude, cut by numerous valleys formed by tributaries of the Congo River. Between the Niari and the Chaillu Plateau is the Bembe Plateau and the Bateke Plateau which extend to the north, parallel with the Congo River, from the capital to Mpouya. The western part of the Congo River Valley occupies an area of some 155,000 sq.km, that is almost half of the national territory. It is bordered by mountains in the west and by highlands in the east and south where also flows the Congo River which with its tributaries forms an intricate lacework. This is a marshy area which during the rainy season suffers from periodic floods.

The river system centres on the mighty Congo as the principal drainage artery, fed by its tributaries, among them the Ubangui which flows from the Central African Republic. In the south, the Congo empties into Lake Stanley (780 sq.km) which it then leaves through the Livingstone Falls before entering Zaire and proceeding southwest towards the Atlantic Ocean. The Kouilou River has its source in the area of the highest plateaux. The significance of the Niari and its deep valley has already been mentioned. This river runs into many sand banks before it empties into the Atlantic Ocean.

The Congo's climate is influenced by its geographical position astride the Equator which crosses the country just north of Fort Rousset. This causes an inversion of seasons in the north and the south of this region. In the north the dry season lasts from November to March and the rainy season from April to October, while in the south it is the other way around. However, in some places, both north and south, there are two rainy or two dry seasons. In general, the climate is tropical, humid and hot, although during the dry season the temperature may drop somewhat. The median annual temperature varies from 20°C to 27°C, but along the coast the cold Benguela Current sometimes drives the thermometer down to 12°C. Generally speaking, there are no appreciable variations in day and night temperatures throughout the country. The average humidity is very high—as much as 80% —and causes considerable discomfort. Rainfall is abundant, although it does vary according to seasons and regions. Its annual average is 1,200 mm, but in some places frequent rainstorms may raise it to as much as 2,000 mm.

Most of the country is covered with dense forests.

Brief history: Pygmy tribes inhabited the present-day territory of the Congo at the beginning of our era at the very time when the two most important Bantu empires—of the Anziko and the Bateke—began to gain predominance, profoundly influencing the socio-economic evolution of the early communities in Central Africa. The Kouilou region extending along the coast all the way to Cabinda was the domain of the Loango kingdom and its many dependent tribes. In the area known as Pool—settled by the Bakongo tribes—in the country's central highlands and extending all the way to Angola was the great kingdom of the Mani-Congo. Both of these kingdoms were well consolidated as early as in the 14th century. The Vili tribes dominated the coast from today's Pointe-Noire to Koulou. In 1482 the Portuguese navigator Diego Cao reached the mouth of the Congo River and subsequently this whole area became one of the main providers of slaves, many of whom were shipped to the Spanish possessions in America.

Slaves were basically acquired by the Europeans settled on the coast by the barter of prisoners-of-war for beads, alcoholic drinks or primitive firearms. This type of slave trade persisted until the beginning of the 19th century.

By then French colonists had replaced the Portuguese. The formation of the subsequent French Equatorial Africa was directly linked with the conquest of Gabon, the first French settlement on Africa's Atlantic coast, established under a treaty signed in 1839 by Bonnet Villaumez and a local tribal chief, Louis Dowe, called King Denis in English and also known as King William.

The French, who had established their presence in Gabon and the Congo, built factories on the coast and then organized expeditions into the interior, after having built the town of Libreville in 1849, the present capital of Gabon and the first administrative centre on the Gulf of Guinea. These early expeditions were carried out by the French navy and commanded in particular by Lieut. Aymos in 1867.

Savorgnan de Brazza led his first expedition up the Oggoue River and later crossed the Congo River in 1878. On his first expedition, between 1875 and 1878, Brazza crossed the territory of the Congo on foot. On his second expedition, from 1879 to 1883, he signed treaties with Makoko, the king of the Bateke, with the aim of establishing French domination of that part of Central Africa and of preventing similar attempts by Stanley who led an expedition along the other bank of the river between 1874 and 1877.

Brazza imposed something of a protectorate on the local tribes and called for peaceful

Under the government of Massemba Debat, reforms of a socialist character were introduced to lessen the foreign influence on the Congo's economic life. Diplomatic relations were established with the socialist countries and cultural, economic and technical cooperation agreements were signed with them.

Nevertheless, the Massemba Debat government was characterized by a pronounced conservatism and was overthrown five years later by a movement of progressive soldiers after having faced different internal crises and attempted coups, including one aborted in the summer of 1966. In the period 1964-1968 the government had been frequently criticized, among others by the official press organ of the revolution, the daily newspaper *Dipanda*, which declared that "it is not possible to continue being moderate".

The then Captain Marien Ngouabi, who was very popular among the military, was called upon by the army in August 1968, to fill the post left vacant by the resignation of President Massemba Debat.

After the "three glorious days", the Congolese revolution became increasingly radicalized, even though internally many political and economic difficulties undermined its gradual consolidation.

On December 31, 1969, the CNR was replaced by the Congolese Labour Party of Marxist-Leninist orientation, and the country was renamed the People's Republic of the Congo. A new constitution was proclaimed on January 3, 1970.

On the eve of the constititution of the Congolese Labour Party—the PCT—the new government survived an attempted coup and in March 1970 another attempt to overthrow it was made by a group led by ex-Lieutenant Kikanga from neighbouring Kinshasa, who seized the radio station Voice of the Congolese Revolution and proclaimed the downfall of the revolution. After several hours of fighting the Kikanga commando group was liquidated by the armed forces. At that time, Lieutenant Ange Diawara distinguished himself in the neutralization of the coup. However, in 1973, Diawara headed a movement engaged in anti-government actions.

The period of the Ngouabi government was marked by a pronounced change in the orientation of Congolese policy, expressed in still closer ties with the socialist countries, a revision of the cooperation agreements with France and the conclusion of new ones (1973), and the formulation of a foreign policy of co-existence with the neighbouring states and of a certain opening towards such countries in the area, as Senegal, the Ivory Coast and others, as well as of a sustained effort to improve relations with Zaire.

Ngouabi led the country along the path of scientific socialism, of non-alignment, of active assistance to the national liberation movements in Africa, and of opposition to imperialism.

Internally, a process of socialization of the national economy was launched, in which the first stage was the nationalization of the JIACONGO sugar company in September 1970.

Revolutionary committees were formed under a decree issued on June 13, 1971, in enterprises and institutions in order to direct political, economic, social and cultural work. These committees were made up of representatives of trade union branches and the management, and were appointed by the Congolese Labour Party.

In the armed forces, the political directorate was abolished and its duties were transferred to the Permanent Military Commission of the PCT, whose chairman was Ngouabi. Its purpose was to build up the party structure in the army, which caused a major conflict between the conservative and the most progressive elements within the national defence apparatus.

The PCT leadership noted the need of close ties with its membership and for this purpose President Ngouabi convened a national conference of all patriotic forces with the aim of forming a united front which would put into effect the results of the Second Special Congress of the PCT.

Besides adoption of new statutes and of a new party programme, the congress proposed the draft of a new constitution which provided for the formation of a People's National Assembly and for the post of Prime Minister. The document was approved and adopted by the Congolese people on July 24, 1973.

Between 1973 and 1976, the PCT and the Congolese government realized a number of changes necessitated by contradictions within their ranks, which were analyzed at the time by President Ngouabi.

The old party structure was abolished in December 1975, and a Special Revolutionary Headquarters was formed and instituted by the PCT with the objective of providing temporary political leadership until the purge of the PCT and the government was completed.

At a National PCT conference in November 1976, President Ngouabi outlined the basic and correct orientation of the PCT, declaring that the African revolution needed the contribution of the Congolese revolution, and that this should produce a stricter sense of duty. This means, he said, that the workers' and peasants' interests must be given priority at this stage of the struggle for national liberation from the imperialist and neo-colonialist yoke. Shortly before his assassination on March 18, 1977, by a commando group led by reactionary Congolese elements and enjoying the support of the Western powers, Ngouabi made an analysis of his country's genuine problems. In this respect, he confirmed that within the leadership there were still opportunist trends which had lost track of and ignored the interests of the masses. He denounced manoeuvres by petty-bourgeois and opportunist intellectuals inside the PCT, aimed at making every party conference and congress deal with problems presented by them and at detracting attention from the main problems facing the people.

In spite of the internal difficulties in consolidating the Congolese revolutionary process, this process clearly demonstrated its course of non-capitalist development and adherence to proletarian internationalism, as aptly documented at the time of the South African and Zairean aggression against the young People's Republic of Angola, or by the Congo's assistance to the African national liberation movements.

After Ngouabi's death, a PCT Military Committee was formed, headed by General Joachim Yhombi Opango and consisting of eleven members. This body expressed itself in favour of a continuation of the Congolese revolutionary process and of the domestic and foreign policies outlined by the assassinated head of state.

The PCT Military Committee functioned until February 7, 1979, when the PCT Central Committee, meeting in plenary session, dissolved it and appointed Prime Minister Louis Sylvain Goma to deal with pending matters until the Third Special Congress of the PCT, scheduled for March. At the same time, the Central Committee decided to appoint the then Defence Minister, Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso, as President of the Republic. It also appointed the chairman of the preparatory committee for the Third Special Congress.

According to the Central Committee, these measures would promote the advance of the revolution and would preserve national unity.

At its session held from March 26 to April 1, the Third Congress decided to elect a new Central Committee, to amend the constitution and to democratize the public health system in addition to other measures. It asserted that the disbanded PCT Military Committee had not corresponded to the people's interests. It declared that the Military Committee had been misused by rightist forces which controlled it, which tried to spread opportunism within the PCT, and which wanted to liquidate the revolutionary movement.

The congress re-asserted the party's determination to continue advancing along the road of socialism and liberation of the Congo.

Internationally, the PCT congress decided to re-activate the policy outlined by the late President Ngouabi and calling for expansion of relations with the socialist countries in order to strengthen proletarian internationalism. It also urged greater participation of the Congo in the non-aligned movement and voiced its opposition to separate solutions of the Middle East conflict and its support of the Palestinian people and of the liberation movements in southern Africa. It identified itself with the position of the socialist countries on such matters as the struggle for peace, support of national liberation movements, and peaceful co-existence.

The Third Special Congress of the PCT concluded with the adoption of documents underlining the party's leading position in the revolutionary process. The delegates elected Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso as chairman of the Central Committee, Head of State, and head of the Council of Ministers. The new party statutes approved by the congress set the term of office of the new Central Committee and its Political Bureau for five years.

In a national referendum held in July 1978, the overwhelming majority of the people (more than 97% of voters) approved a new Constitution of the People's Republic of the Congo. At the same time they elected members of the organ of people's power at all levels, including the People's National Assembly which opened its session on August 13.

At that session, President Sasou-Nguesso described the recent parliamentary and local elections, as well as the referendum on the new constitution, as major steps towards the realization of the decisions adopted by the Third Special PCT Congress.

A plenary session of the PCT Central Committee, held on August 15, 1980, analyzed the implementation of those decisions and in its final communique called for increased production and productivity of labour, for better political work and for greater discipline and sense of responsibility among party members, as essential prerequisites for the realization of the decisions taken by the Third Congress. At the same time it asserted the support extended by the people, the PCT and the Congolese government to Angola's struggle against racist aggression and to the Palestinian cause, and condemned the Israeli decision to formalize the annexation of Jerusalem.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the mainstays of the Congolese economy, which employ an economically active population of some 503,000 (FAO estimate for 1977), of which 40% are engaged in farming.

According to FAO figures for 1978, the Congo produced 532,000 tons of manioc, 25,000 tons of bananas, 18,000 tons of peanuts, 10,000 tons of maize, and 4,000 tons of rice. The most important mining products are crude petroleum (1,582,000 tons in 1977) and potash (135,000 tons in 1977).

With 49,338,000,000 CFA francs of imports and 42,559,000,000 CFA francs of exports, the Congolese 1977 balance of trade showed a deficit of just under 7,000,000,000 CFA francs. The Congo's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 11,370,000 dollars in 1978. In the same year the balance of payments showed a deficit of 8,600,000 dollars. The 1977 GNP amounted to 710,000,000 dollars. The national currency is the CFA franc whose rate of exchange in February 1980 was 203.2 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The new constitution adopted in July 1979 declares that the people are the source of all state power exercised through a single party as the supreme form of political and social action by the people.

Under the constitutional provisions, the supreme bodies of state power are the National Assembly of People's Power, the President of the Republic, and the Council of Ministers.

The National Assembly has 153 members who have legislative authority and who represent all regions of the People's Republic of the Congo. Bodies of people's power are also established at regional and local levels. Members of the National Assembly are not paid for the exercise of their office and must periodically report on their work to their constituents.

The Chairman of the Central Committee of the PCT is at the same time the President of the Republic, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. The Political Bureau of the PCT implements the policy set by the Central Committee of the PCT in periods between the latter's plenary sessions or conferences.

Armed forces: There are approximately 7,500 men serving in the regular Congolese army and 4,000 men serving in auxiliary forces. While in office, President Marien Ngouabi reinforced the National People's Army as the "firm redoubt of the revolution", and at its head defeated an attempted small-scale mercenary invasion.

Organizations: The Congolese Labour Party (PCT) was founded under the government of Marien Ngouabi in 1969, and has tirelessly struggled against vestiges of colonialism and neo-colonialism. Ngouabi rejected anti-Communist tendences disguised as "African socialism", and constantly opposed imperialism and its allies and proteges in Africa, racists and neo-colonialists. The PCT has been continuously fighting against opportunist elements and admits to its ranks only true, sound and militant revolutionaries.

There are also the Revolutionary Union of Congolese Women, the Socialist Youth Organization of the Congo, and the Confederation of Congolese Trade Unions, all of which play an important role in the construction of the People's Republic.

Education and sports: Official data show that about 95% of the population of school-age are literate, which is one of the highest figures in Africa. Primary education is compulsory and strives to combine study with economic life, agricultural practice in particular. Secondary education is oriented towards vocational training.

In the school term 1977-1978 there were about 1,400 primary and secondary schools in the country with some 484,000 pupils. The Marien Ngouabi University was founded in 1971, and in the 1977-1978 term had an enrollment of 3,642 students.

The most popular sports in the country are football, volleyball, basketball and athletics.

Public health: Together with education, public health is one of the key targets set by the PCT and the government. There is one hospital bed for every 175 inhabitants and one doctor for every 6,000 inhabitants. The country has 121 hospitals.

Religion: Approximately half the population practises traditional African cults. There are some 400,000 Roman Catholics and about 150,000 Protestants. Roughly 20,000 persons belong to independent African churches which are members of the World Council of Churches. In the capital and in Pointe-Noire there are also about 5,000 Moslems.

Official name: The Republic of Cuba.
Area: 110,922 sq.km. The main island of the Cuban Archipelago measures 105,007 sq.km, the Island of Youth 2,200 sq.km, and the remaining lesser islands and keys 3,715 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Cuba is bounded by the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean, in the south by the Caribbean Sea, in the east by the Windward Passage, and in the west by the Yucatan Channel.
Population: 9,800,000 inhabitants according to 1979 estimates. The annual rate of population growth is 1.33% according to a United Nations projection for the period 1975-1980.
Capital: Havana (1,985,600 inhabitants in 1978).
Principal cities: Santiago de Cuba, Camaguey, Holguin and Guantanamo in the Eastern Region, Santa Clara, Cienfuegos and Sancti Spiritus in the Central Region, and Pinar del Rio and Matanzas in the Western Region.
Languages: Spanish is the official language.
Public holidays: January 1, Anniversary of the Revolution; May 1, Labour Day; July 26, Day of the National Uprising; October 10, Anniversary of the Beginning of the National Liberation Wars.
Geography: The Cuba archipelago includes the Island of Cuba, the Island of Youth and some 1,600 adjacent keys. Cuba is the largest island in the Antilles.

The country lies in the northern part of the Caribbean Sea close to the Tropic of Cancer. It extends between 74°8' and 84°57' west longitude and between 19°49' and 23°18' north latitude.

The closest countries are Haiti 77 km to the east, Jamaica 140 km to the southeast, the United States 145 km to the northwest, and Mexico 210 km to the west.

The Island of Cuba has 5,746 km of coastline. The northern coast, 3,209 km long, has many beaches, while in the south the coast is rather marshy along its length of 2,537 km.

There are more than 200 rivers, the longest of them being the Cauto with its 250 km in the eastern province of Granma. The principal mountain ranges extend in the two extremes and the centre of the main island. The tallest peak is Mt. Turquino (1,960 m) in the heart of the Sierra Maestra which parallels the coast in the southernmost part of the island.

The mean annual temperature is 25.5°C. There are two seasons—the rainy season in the spring and the summer, and the dry season covering the autumn and the winter. The most pronounced atmospheric phenomenon are cyclones which frequently turn into hurricanes when the winds acquire the velocity of 120 km per hour and cause material damage as well as loss of life.

Cuba has an abundance of fertile soil and its pleasant climate favours the cultivation of a great variety of tropical plants, including sugar cane—the country's principal agricultural resource—tobacco, citrus and other tropical fruit, coffee and a variety of fibre crops, vegetables and tubers.

In the north of the eastern region there are large laterite deposits of nickel, iron and cobalt. Cuba possesses some of the world's greatest reserves of nickel and produces such ore concentrates as sinter of nickel and cobalt, as well as nickel and cobalt oxide and sulphate. There are also deposits of copper and manganese ore, marble, limestone, kaolin and other minerals.

Brief history: The original inhabitants of Cuba are thought to have been descendants of tribes from the area at the mouth of the Orinoco River on the South American continent, who reached the Antilles islands in successive waves.

When the *conquistadores* arrived, the Cuban archipelago was inhabited by some 100,000 aborignes. Although there were some differences in the level of development among the individual groups of aborigines, the most advanced were the Tains whose culture was at the level of neolithic man, but they were also farmers and potters.

Other, less advanced groups included the Subtains, the Mayari group, and the Cayo Redondo and Guayabo Blanco Siboneys.

Although Cuba had been discovered by Columbus on October 27, 1492, it did not attract colonizers until the second half of the 16th century because of the absence of gold and silver.

The first town, Baracoa, was founded in Cuba in 1512, in the eastermost part of the island. San Cristobal de la Habana was founded two years later and eventually became the island's capital.

The Spanish colonists imposed a system of patronage on the Cuban aborigines, which in fact was a kind of slavery and resulted in the extermination of the island's original population. To replace them, slaves were brought to America from the African coast.

In the 17th century, livestock-raising was introduced and encouraged, and, on a lesser scale, also the cultivation of sugar cane and tobacco.

Corsair and pirate activity underlined the strategic value of Cuba as a link in the chain of communication between Spain and its American colonies. The unceasing wars between the European colonial powers led to the occupation of Havana by the British in the second half of the 18th century.

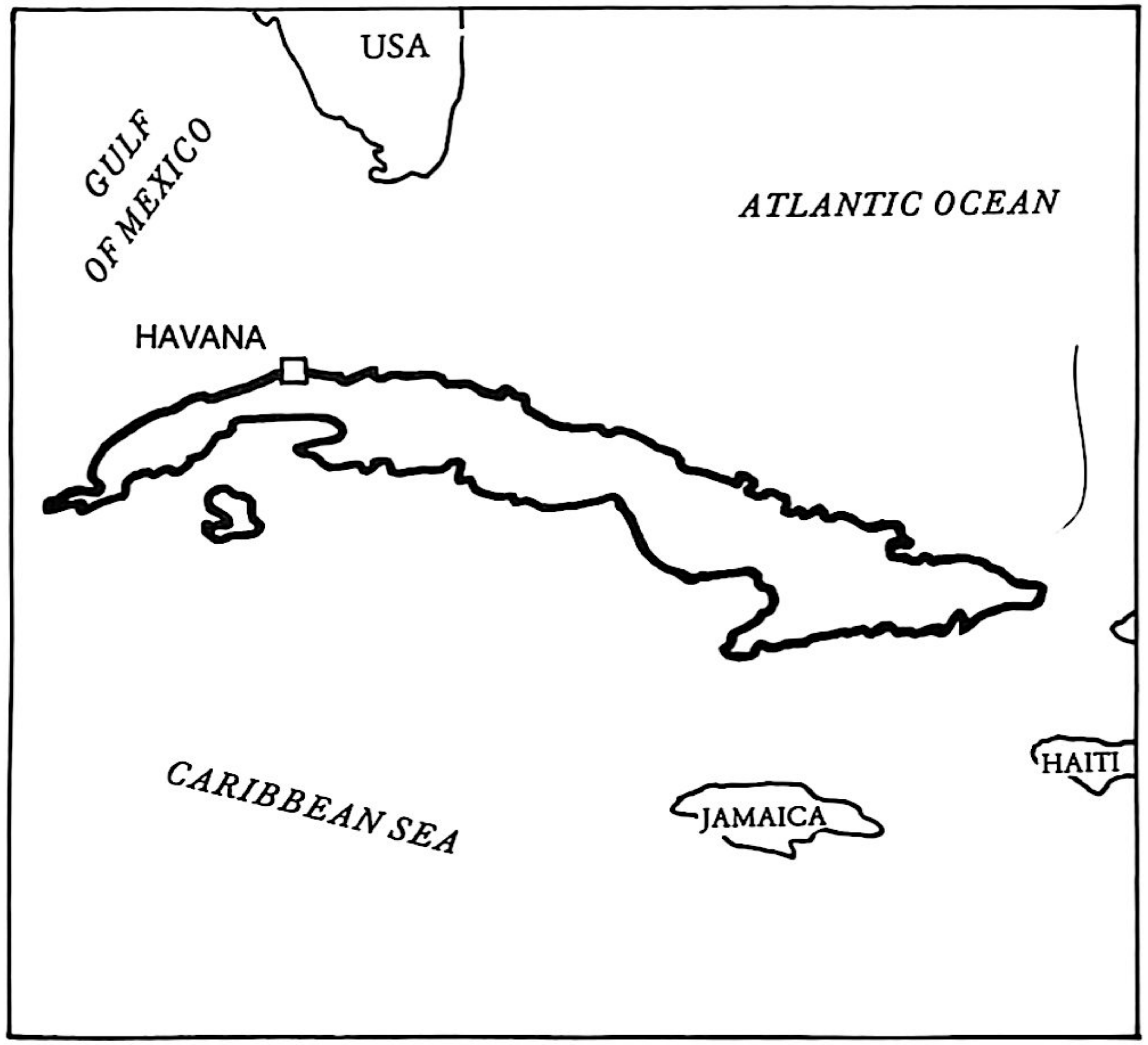
What Britain was trying to achieve was to break Spain's monopoly on trade in its American colonies and to introduce there the products of the steadily expanding British industry. Moreover, Havana was a fine prize for any conqueror. On June 6, 1762, the Spanish look-outs signalled the approach of a British squadron in battle formation, consisting of 19 gun-ships, 34 cruisers and numerous troop supply vessels—altogether a force of some 200 ships and 12,000 troops in addition to more than 6,000 sailors. The operation was the largest ever launched against the American continent. The next day the British seized Cojimar while the thirteen Colonies confronted the artillery of Morro Castle. On June 10, the British landed at La Chorrera northwest of Havana and attacked Guanabacoa in the east which was stubbornly defended by guerillas led by Pepe Antonio Gomez, a Creole. Then the besiegers intensively bombarded Morro Castle from the slopes of La Cabana, and the fortress fell a month later when one of its bastions was blown up. On August 12, after approximately two months of siege and attack, the British entered Havana at the cost of 1,800 men, while the Spaniards had lost more than 1,000 men and about 2,000 wounded. The local militia, the slaves and the local inhabitants had shown greater courage in battle than the Spanish soldiers. After the fall of Havana, the British took tremendous booty, but they were unable to penetrate farther than Mariel and Matanzas because of the population's hostility. The British occupation ended on July 6, 1793, following a peace treaty signed by the belligerent powers.

The eleven months of the British occupation of Havana, during which period a large number of slaves had been brought to Cuba to work in the fields, spurred trade especially with the thirteen North American colonies, and sugar became firmly established as the mainstay of Cuba's economy.

This development of sugar production brought forth and strengthened a group of rich, slave-owning landlords who, with their character of a bourgeoisie, quickly ran into conflict with the absolute control exercised by the metropolitan power over the island's trade.

The worldwide economic crises in 1857 and 1866 had a profound impact on the Cuban economy, bringing about a steep drop in the price of sugar. For its part, the Spanish Crown never stopped raising taxes and kept Cuba as a mere source of fiscal income and as a market for realizing huge profits through a strict regime of customs duties detrimental to the

CUBA


USA
GULF OF MEXICO
ATLANTIC OCEAN
HAVANA
CARIBBEAN SEA
JAMAICA
HAITI

Cuban slave-holding landowners.

All this rapidly intensified the contradictions between the colony and the metropolitan power, and forced the Cuban landowners to seek a way out from their difficult situation through independence. On October 10, 1868, Carlos Manuel de Cespedes, leading the most progressive and patriotic group of the Cuban slave-owning landlords, launched the First War of Independence.

This "Ten-Year War" was in its character a bourgeois, democratic and anti-slavery revolution which strengthened the process of the formation of Cuban nationhood and became a school for future revolutionaries.

A number of outstanding personalities fought for ten years at the head of Cuban troops, including Ignacio Agramonte and the Dominican Maximo Gomez who provided Cuba with an early example of revolutionary internationalism.

Although the war failed, ending with the so-called Zanjon Pact--but not without some strong opposition to peace without independence, as manifested in the Baragua Protest championed by General Antonio Maceo—the spirit of independence continued to be forged in a fragile truce during which attempts occurred to restart the war, as had happened in Oriente with the so-called Chiquita War.

That fruitful truce, which lasted from 1878 to 1895, was used for tireless efforts to unify the nation's will for the "necessary war" as it was called by Jose Marti, Cuba's national hero who paved the way for a new insurrection and founded the Cuban Revolutionary Party, the first revolutionary party in Cuba, to fight for independence and for a deomocratic republic. The party's statute also called for a struggle for the independence of Puerto Rico.

On February 24, 1895, war broke out, led by the radical sectors of the Cuban middle class whose interests coincided with the general interests of the whole nation and of the working people.

In the democratic and national revolution the idea of independence was accompanied in the minds of its principal initiators by elimination of the threat of U.S. expansion which had already begun to spread to the Caribbean area.

After three years of fierce fighting in which two of the revolution's main leader—Jose Marti and Antonio Maceo were killed—the Spanish domination of Cuba was broken and by 1898 the Spanish army had been virtually defeated.

The blowing up of the battleship U.S.S. Maine and the self-aggression thus staged by the United States were used by that country as a pretext for entering the war. This climaxed a series of schemes by the United States to gain domination of the island, which included an offer to buy Cuba from Spain.

The so-called Spanish-Cuban-American War ended as may have been expected, namely with the defeat of Spain. The United States and Spain concluded the Treaty of Paris behind the backs of the Cubans who had fought for their independence for thirty years and made possible the final defeat of the Spanish troops on land in the Spanish-Cuban-American War. Spain ceded to the United States its Antilles islands of Cuba and Puerto Rico, as well as the Philippines and Guam in the Pacific Ocean. All these territories were occupied by U.S. troops.

This military occupation of Cuba lasted four years, from 1898 to 1902. The struggle waged by the Cubans evoked sympathy throughout the world, even among Americans themselves. The heroism of the Cubans inspired respect and the island was not annexed by the United States, as originally contemplated by Washington, because of concern over the possibility of a Cuban rebellion.

Cuba was granted formal independence on May 20, 1902. Nevertheless, a constitutional clause or annex, known as the Platt Amendment, guaranteed to the United States the right to intervene in Cuba whenever it considered it convenient and necessary. American troops withdrew, but the occupiers acquired special rights to build coaling bunkers and the naval base in Guantanamo Bay.

Thus began the almost 57-year history of the Cuban Republic subjected to the political and economic control of the United States, which had a powerful impact on the country's education and culture.

U.S. investments in Cuba, which in 1896 amounted to 50 million dollars, rose to 160 million in 1906, 205 million in 1911, and 1,200 million in 1923. They included ownership of three quarters of the island's sugar industry.

At the end of September 1906, faced with a political crisis produced by President Tomas Estrada Palma's attempt to be re-elected for another term, the United States again intervened in Cuba on Palma's request. Eight U.S. warships were positioned around the island and landed troops at different points. William H. Taft, the U.S. Undersecretary of State, assumed the office of provisional governor of Cuba on September 29, 1906. This second U.S. occupation lasted two years and four months.

The governments which succeeded each other in the first decades of that Republic were characterized by corruption—a heritage of the U.S. interventions—and their dependence on the United States.

Cuba's main resources were taken over by U.S. capital, frequently through skilfully devised concessions. The best farmland, the largest sugar refineries, the mineral resources, the basic industries, the railways, the banks, the utilities, foreign trade, everything fell under the control of United States capital. At that time Cuba was economically backward, characterized by its single-crop economy, chronic unemployment, illiteracy, moral degeneration, political and administrative corruption, and anti-democratic governments.

At the beginning of the 20th century, the first political organization of a socialist character emerged, inspired by Carlos Balino and Agustin Martin Veloz (Martinillo), who denounced the abandonment of Marti's ideals.

With the beginning of World War I in 1914, the influx of U.S. capital into the island grew and the economic crisis further deepened. Unemployment rose and so did the incidence of people's and workers' militant actions. The Cuban workers' and revolutionary movement was influenced by the victory of the Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917.

The high point of this stage was reached with the formation of the first trade-union centre, the National Confederation of Cuban Workers, and with the founding by Julio Antonio Mella, Carlos Balino, Fabio Grobart and others of the first Cuban Marxist party in 1925.

The workers and peasants, together with revolutionary-minded students, who had emerged in the 1920s, waged great battles against the evils of the Cuban Republic and for national and social emancipation.

In the midst of the world economic crisis, which affected the capitalist countries in the 1930s, and under its impact on the Cuban economy, the tyrannical regime of Gerardo Machado Morales (1925-1933) was overthrown by a general strike following eight years of struggle against this despotic government.

An important role was played in the overthrow of the Machado regime by the Student Directorate, the Student Left Wing and specially by the Communist Party and the National Confederation of Cuban Workers, led by Ruben Martinez Villena.

Once again the United States intervened in Cuba's politics, although this time it did not land any troops. First, it tried to mediate between Machado and his opponents in order to maintain him and his overthrown regime in power. Then it tried to find a solution in replacing the Machado government with a caretaker cabinet but that lasted only a few days.

The discontent and civil disobedience also spread to the military.. On September 4, 1933, non-commissioned officers and soldiers mutinied and were subsequently backed by students and other revolutionary groups. A Provisional Revolutionary Government of a nationalist character was formed, but its composition was too heterogenous and was therefore called the Pentarchy. A few days later, on September 10, a presidential regime headed by Ramon Grau San Martin took over.

Antonio Guiteras, the leader of the left wing in the government, decreed in his capacity of Minister of the Interior a number of measures which received popular support. They included decrees reducing working hours to eight a day and fixing a minimum wage, cutting electricity rates by 45% and instituting government supervision over the Electricity Company which was dominated by U.S. Capital.

This government lasted a hundred days during which the ex-sergeant Fulgencio Batista, who had joined the "Sergeants' Rebellion" of September 4, 1933, and who later seized control of the movement, appeared on the political scene.

On January 15, 1934, Grau turned over the presidency to Carlos Hevia who held it a mere twenty-four hours. From then on it was the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Colonel Batista, who decided in agreement with the U.S. Embassy, who should govern in Cuba. The country lived through a period of political and social upheaval.

In March 1935, a general strike was bruatlly crushed with many victims among the working class. In May of the same year the assassination of Guiteras put an end to the last vestige of armed resistance.

This whole period was characterized by continuous battles fought by workers and the democratic forces in a situation of internal oppression and foreign dependence. Most of the statements made then and actions held had a pronounced anti-U.S. character.

These battles of the 1930s eventually ended with a number of victories for the people —release of political prisoners, abolition of the Platt Amendment (although the United States reserved for itself the right to intervene in any Latin American country), legalization of opposition political organization, including the Communist Party, and the convening of a Constituent Assembly in 1940.

The country was governed during this period by Batista (1940-1944), Ramon Grau San Martin (1944-1948), and Carlos Prio Socarras (1948-1952). Their governments were characterized by administrative corruption, anti-Communist repression of the trade unions, and docility in the face of pressure exercised by the United States and its financial interests in Cuba.

Under these governments popular discontent grew to such an extent that it affected the presidential aspirations of the political bosses, made possible election results which would be adverse to them, and opened new prospects for improving public administration and for spurring national consciousness.

With these prospects in the offing, Fulgencio Batista once again forcibly entered the Cuban political scene, relying on his influence among the rank-and file of the military, on the support of the politicians and industrialists, and on the benevolence of the United States. Thus, he seized power by a military coup on March 10, 1952. Cuba then passed through a period of violence and despotic rule, when the social ills—unemployment, hunger, poverty and disease—became further aggravated and additional concessions were made to U.S capital, while official corruption became still more rampant.

On July 26, 1953, Fidel Castro attacked the Moncada Barracks in Santiago de Cuba, the island's second largest military base, with the objective of arming the people and forming a nucleus of revolutionary struggle. Simultaneously, another attack was launched on the military barracks in Bayamo in the eastern part of Cuba. Neither operation succeeded, but they helped make the public aware of the forthcoming struggle. Assuming his own defence at his trial, Fidel Castro denounced in his speech known as *History Will Absolve Me* the corruption and anti-democratic character of the existing regime and outlined an advanced programme of national objectives, which was to become the foundation of the emerging July 26th Movement.

This programme became a guideline for immediate action in the revolutionary struggle and in its substance was the most advanced programme of its time in keeping with the prevalent conditions.

While in prison, Fidel Castro and his comrades who had survived, laid the final basis of the Movement. A strong public campaign for the release of political prisoners eventually secured the freedom of those who had attacked the Moncada Barracks. For some time they stayed in Cuba, but then most of them went to Mexico to prepare for armed insurrection. This objective materialized on December 2, 1956, when the yacht Granma with 82 men on board landed on the Las Coloradas Beach on the southern coast of Cuba's easternmost province. Two days earlier, an armed insurrection was staged under the leadership of Frank Pais in Santiago de Cuba, the capital of the old Oriente Province, in the hope that it would coincide with the Granma landing. Subsequently, the clandestine people's struggle was organized throughout the island as the workers ignored the trade-union directives imposed by the Batista dictatorship.

After initial set-backs, the members of the Granma expedition, who had been dispersed, succeeded in re-uniting and in forming a rebel army. This army grew in strength and established its base of operations in the Sierra Maestra range. Later it broke through into the northern, mountainous part of Orient Province, from where it then descended to the lowlands as far as the central province of Las Villas, operating in two invading columns led by Camilo Cienfuegos and Ernesto "Che" Guevarra.

The students, led since 1955 by Jose Antonio Echeverria, the president of the University Students' Federation, almost daily confronted the police. Their struggle acquired a profoundly revolutionary character and a definite orientation.

The conditions under which the struggle was being waged necessitated the formation of a secret body, the Revolutionary Directorate, which guided the struggle of the masses of students and at the same time was the armed branch of the University Students' Federaion—the FEU.

At the end of 1956, Jose Antonio Echeverria went to Mexico where he signed with Fidel Castro the Mexico Charter, pledging on behalf of the Directorate support to the Granma expedition. However, a lack of weapons forced the Directorate to postpone that action.

On March 13, 1957, meeting their pledge signed in Mexico, the Directorate students attacked the Presidential Palance in Havana with the objective of overthrowing the Batista tyranny. Although the operation failed and a number of brave revolutionary fighters were killed in the attack, including Echeverria himself, it set an example for the struggle which followed.

One month after the attack on the Presidential Palace, four of its survivors were shot in Humboldt Street in Havana, among them Fructuoso Rodriguez, the president of the FEU and of its Directorate.

In December 1956, the Batista regime was on the verge of military and political collapse. All of its offensives against the rebels in the eastern mountains had failed and the forces of the First Front (commanded by Fidel Castro), of the Second Front (commanded by producing ten million tons of sugar by the end of that period. However, a number of adverse factors prevented the realization of this goal, but still, Cuba produced 8.5 million tons as the record sugar output in its history.

The years of survival passed and from 1970 on Cuba concentrated on economic development, consolidation of the Party and establishment of government institutions.

Foundations began to be laid for a reorganization of Cuba's government institutions, which ended the provisional character of the government, dating back to 1959.

The government was given a new structure in 1972, for which purpose an Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers was formed, including the Vice-Premiers responsible for various sectors. The apparatus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba was also restructured in February 1973, and in the middle of 1974 the first organs of People's Power were elected in Mantanzas Province as an experiment which was then applied throughout the country.

The judiciary was also reorganized in the same period and People's Courts were established at the supreme provincial and local levels.

In December 1975, the Communist Party of Cuba held its First Congress. It made a historical analysis of the Cuban Revolution, which evaluated the political, economic and social aspects of the changes that had taken place in Cuba, and outlined future tasks. The Congress elected a new Central Committee, a Political Bureau of thirteen members, headed by a nine-member Secretariat. The Central Committee had 95 full members and 12 substitutes. The highly important Congress stipulated the leading and guiding role of the Party in the state and society, and adopted directives for the establishment of organs of People's Power throughout the island, as well as for the institution of a system of economic administration and planning in connection with the new political administration division of the country.

On February 15, 1976, a national referendum was held to approve a new constitution, for which 5,473,534 voters cast a positive ballot. 108 years after Cuba's struggle for emancipation had begun, the constitution went into effect on February 24, 1976. Earlier, at public assemblies in which more than six million people had taken part, its draft had been discussed and pertinent changes proposed there, were incorporated in the final text. The supreme law of the Republic of Cuba is inspired by the profound and already realised aspiration of Jose Marti: "I desire that the foremost law of our republic should be the Cubans devotion to the full dignity of man". Thus, the more than century long struggle of the Cuban people for their true freedom and independence was successfully accomplished.

On April 15, 1976, fifteen years after the historical and transcendental revolutionary victory at Playa Giron, Fidel Castro announced Cuba's participation in the war which Angola had been waging against invasions by South Africa's racists and mercenaries in the service of the CIA. He described how the revolutionary forces had defeated these efforts to subvert order and overthrow the government of this African country, and declared: "The victory in Angola was a twin of the victory at Giron. Angola is an African Giron for the Yankee imperialists."

On December 2, 1976, on the anniversary of the Granma landing, the National Assembly of People's Power was constituted and Blas Roca Calderio was elected its chairman. The next day, the State Council was constituted and the Council of Ministers approved. Fidel Castro was elected to preside over both bodies.

In December 1977, in his speech at the final meeting of the Second Session of the National Assembly of People's Power, the First Secretary of the PCC and President of the State Council and of the Council of Ministers, Fidel Castro, proclaimed Cuba's right to pursue its militant solidarity with the peoples of Africa, who requested it, as had happened in Angola, Ethiopia and other nations fighting against fascism and racism; he declared that this solidarity was not negotiable for any price, since it was a matter of principle.

In the course of the same session, the Island of Pines was given the name of the Island of Youth, the Childhood Code was enacted, as well as a law on decorations and titles of the Republic of Cuba, and the exact territorial boundaries of the provinces and municipalities were set. The Assembly also approved a report on international relations and the annual reports for 1977 of the Supreme Court, the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, the Provincial Assemblies, and the Special Municipality of the Island of Youth.

In keeping with the statement made by Fidel Castro at the aforesaid session of the National Assembly at the end of 1977 about Cuba's right to pursue its solidarity with African peoples requesting it, a statement issued in March 1978 announced the liberation of Somali-occupied Ethiopian territory with the help of internationalist Cuban soldiers.

In April, the President of the Ethiopian Provisional Military Administrative Council and of the Ethiopian Council of Ministers, Mengistu Haile Mariam, visited Cuba and later in the same year, in September, Fidel Castro made a visit to Ethiopia.

In July 1978, the Eleventh World Festival of Youth and Students was held in Cuba. Taking part in that event were more than 2,000 organizations of different political trends and more than twenty thousand young people from 145 countries, which figures well document the extent, universality and historical transcendence of the Festival. In its course, the Code of Childhood and Youth was enacted.

In the same year of 1978, towards its very end, a dialogue with the Cuban community abroad, which Fidel Castro had planned, was initiated.

At the close of November and the beginning of December, 1,803 delegates attended the 14th Congress of the Centre of Cuban Workers.

1979 was the year of the 20th anniversary of victory and for the first time the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held its Summit Meeting—the Sixth—in a Latin American country.

That session became a fine demonstration of the strength of the non-aligned movement and its growing influence in international politics.

In spite of efforts to the contrary, exerted by the United States, the general principles of the Movement were confirmed and its independent position and anti-imperialist character were upheld, just as its stated purpose of fighting for the elimination of injustice, inequality, oppression and racism, for peace and for the pursuit of true economic and social development of the developing countries.

The next month, in October, Fidel Castro addressed the U.N. General Assembly in his capacity as President of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. In his speech he made a brilliant analysis of the world situation and pointed to the necessity of all the world's statesmen saying farewell to arms and dedicating themselves in a civilized manner to the most pressing problems of our era as an indispensable prerequisite for human survival.

In December, Havana played host to a Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Seventy-Seven, which was opened by Fidel Castro who reiterated his statements made at the United Nations two months earlier.

The outstanding events of that year included Fidel Castro's visit to Mexico, the First Congress of the Federation of University Students—the FEU-and the 20th anniversary of the disappearance of Camilo Cienfuegos.

The artificial crisis which President James Carter tried to create over an alleged presence of Soviet combat troops in Cuba utterly failed.

The hurricane Frederick, which hit Cuba soon after the conclusion of the Sixth Summit

Raul Castro), of the Third Front (commanded by Juan Almeida), and the troops operating in the plains gradually tightened their encirclement of Santiago de Cuba after having taken many towns in that province. In Las Villas Province, the forces commanded by Camilo Cienfuegos captured the Yaguajay Barracks—a major enemy position—while Guevara's troops won a battle at Santa Clara. Guerilla forces of the People's Socialist Party and the Directorate, which were also operating in various parts of Las Villas Province, joined the Rebel Army under the command of Cienfuegos and Guevara. Fighting was also going on in the mountains of Pinar del Rio. The underground movement in the cities, especially in Santiago and Havana, maintained its effectiveness in spite of brutal repression by the regime's forces. The last day of 1958 was also the last day of the Batista dictatorship. On December 31, Batista and his most compromised henchmen, including murderers and torturers, fled the country for Santo Domingo, while others made their way to the United States. For Cuba, a nightmare of violence ended and a new era began in its history of struggle for genuine political, economic and social independence.

Once established in power, the Revolutionary Government introduced a deep and radical transformation of the country. It set up Revolutionary Tribunals and a Ministry for the Restoration of Embezzled Property in order to mete out punishment for the political and administrative crimes committed since March 10, 1952. Political prisoners were freed, the political parties and groups which had supported Batista were dissolved and the national and local agencies of state power were replaced by revolutionary authorities. In addition, the army and the police were disarmed and disbanded and were replaced by members of the Rebel Army. A purge of the judiciary was also carried out.

Fidel Castro assumed the office of Prime Minister in February 1959, and several months later, in June of the same year, following some changes in the first government, Osvaldo Dorticos was appointed President of the Republic.

In the workers' movement, trade-union bureaucracy was removed and new leaders were elected. Workers who had been dismissed for political or social reasons were reinstated. Rents for housing were reduced by 40 to 50%, and telephone and electricity rates were also cut. The state assumed the construction of urban and rural housing, and confiscated the property of individuals who had enriched themselves from the state treasury or by illicit transactions covered up by the previous governments. Thus began the era of state ownership and emerged the embryo of the socialist sector of the national economy.

On May 17, 1959, the First Agrarian Reform Act was adopted, which eliminated large-scale land ownership, both domestic and foreign. This was quickly followed by expropriation of the land and its redistribution among the peasants.

The United States cut its Cuban sugar quota for its domestic market on July 4, 1960, and encouraged counter-revolution in Cuba, which carried out sabotage and assassination of individuals, and organized armed gangs and conspiracies to assassinate Cuban leaders. The revolutionary authorities reacted by establishing Workers' and Peasants' Militias and Committees for the Defence of the Revolution (CDR).

On August 6, 1960, the principal U.S. companies were nationalized and on September 17, all banks with U.S. capital operating in Cuba were also taken over by the state.

On September 2, the First Havana Declaration was adopted by popular vote, condemning "exploitation of man by man". On October 13, the Revolutionary Government nationalized all Cuban and foreign banks as well as 382 large Cuban companies. On October 24, the remaining U.S. companies in Cuba were nationalized in response to the embargo placed by the United States on all Cuban goods five days earlier. On December 16, Cuba's sugar quota was completely cancelled by the United States which broke off diplomatic relations with Cuba on January 3, 1961.

On April 15, 1961, planes based in Nicaragua and marked with Cuban insignia bombed and strafed three Cuban airports in order to destroy on the ground the fledgling revolutionary Air Force. Cuban anti-aircraft guns responded to the attack, but the treacherous aggression killed a number of members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces and the Militia, and wounded fifty-three. The next day, at the funeral of the victims in Havana, Fidel Castro denounced the involvement of the CIA in the events, as well as the connivance of the U.S. government leaders. He then proclaimed the socialist character of the Cuban revolution and the people's determination to defend their country and its sovereignty at any cost.

At dawn on April 17, 1961, mercenaries trained and armed by the United States landed on the southern coast of Matanzas Province at Playa Giron and Playa Larga. They ran into tenacious resistance by militiamen on patrol. They succeeded in penetrating several kilometres inland but were contained by heroic resistance put up by the militiamen and troops from the Militia Cadres Training School, who had rushed to the scene of the fighting. Several planes and a handful of pilots meanwhile obstructed the enemy's landing operation, destroyed their landing ships and later also most of the attacking planes. Subsequently, several militia batallions from Havana, together with army troops and the National Revolutionary Police, joined the battle. In less than seventy-two hours the invasion was crushed, thus preventing the CIA from moving to Cuba a "government" it had already set up in Miami. It was a great victory for the Cuban people, which entered history as "the first defeat of Yankee imperialism in America".

In the middle of 1961, Integrated Revolutionary Organizations (ORI) were established as the first step towards the formation of a united political instrument of the revolution. Subsequently, the July 26th Revolutionary Movement, the People's Socialist Party and the Revolutionary Directorate of March 13th merged.

In March 1962, the ORI was reorganized and the United Party of the Cuban Socialist Revolution (PURSC) was formed. The process of unification of all revolutionaries and the growth of the political and ideological consciousness of the people reached their climax in the founding of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) in October 1965.

The American fiasco in Cuba made the ruling circles of the United Stated consider direct aggression. The tension steadily increased by Washinton culminated with the notorious Caribbean Crisis in October 1962, which brought the world to the edge of nuclear war. With the backing of the people, the Revolutionary Government resisted the United States threat to wipe out the island. The attacks, sabotage and attempts to murder the revolutionary leaders, as well as assassinations and counter-revolutionary acts financed by the CIA, continued for several years. This struggle claimed thousands of dead and wounded and caused immense material damage to the nation's economy.

On October 3, 1963, a new Agrarian Reform Act was passed, which set 67 hectares as the maximum area of private land holding. Farms and land holdings exceeding this area were nationalized.

In March 1968, a Revolutionary Offensive was launched, whereby small enterprises and business establishments passed into state hands. This move was made when the economic blockade and the necessity of optimum utilization of the country's human and financial resources had become more intensive. The only forms of private property which then remained were the land owned by peasants or farmers, which represented thirty per cent of all farmland, and a small part of the transport system (lorries and taxis) which continued functioning as the personal property of those directly operating it.

The economic blockade imposed by the United States continued. In the course of the five-year period begween 1965 and 1970 the nation concentrated most of its effort on

Meeting of the Non-Aligned Countries, caused great damage to agriculture and forced the evacuation of some 58,000 people.

1980 was a year of trials for the Cuban people and was fraught with turbulent events and aggravation of international tension due to the rise to power in the United States of the most reactionary forces and groups of that country.

The most reactionary forces in the political life of the United States, acting in complicity with the pro-imperialist and anti-national governments in Latin America and other parts of the world, prepared and realized a monstrous provocation against the Cuban Revolution. That provocation reached the point of crisis on April 1, with the death of the Cuban soldier Pedro Ortiz Cabrera, who stood guard at the Peruvian embassy in Havana, during an attempt by a group of anti-social and counter-revolutionary elements to break into the embassy.

Both the governments of Peru and Venezuela had pursued, before these attempts to break illegally into their diplomatic missions, a policy of encouragement of tolerance to elements who were in no way politically persecuted and were, on the contrary, anti-social elements, agents-provocateurs and enemy agents who acted in this manner under instructions they had received.

The Cuban government responded to this machination by withdrawing the protection which both embassies had requested, and this resulted in an invasion of the Peruvian embassy compound by basically anti-social elements which U.S. propaganda at the beginning described as "dissidents".

A vicious campaign of slander and lies was launched against Cuba, waged mostly by the capitalist news agencies and press, radio and television throughout the world, but especially in Latin America.

The Cuban people's reaction to this provocation, which was accompanied by U.S. military threats, was one of the most magnificent chapters in the history of the Cuban Revolution and gave a resolute answer to the enemies of socialism.

Two marches by the militant Cuban people—the first one held in Havana and the other one throughout the country, in which more than five million persons took part—just as a huge public rally held in the Place of the Revolution on May 1, to condemn imperialism and the anti-social elements leaving the country, demonstrated the strength, unity, political consciousness, militancy and discipline of the people.

It was especially the Cuban youth who distinguished themselves in this great political and ideological battle which the country's leaders viewed as one of the most important political, ideological and moral victories scored by the Revolution in all its history.

In September, an event took place of immense significance for Cuba, Latin America and the world. The first Cuban and Latin American cosmonaut, Lieut. Col. Arnaldo Tamayo Mendez, was launched into orbit around the Earth within the framework of the Intercosmos programme, as a member of a joint Soviet-Cuban crew headed by Col. Yuri Romanenko.

On September 26, after they had successfully accomplished all the tasks entrusted to them, Romanenko and Tamayo safely returned to Earth and were subsequently awarded the titles of Heroes of the Soviet Union and Cuba.

There were other outstnding events which marked 1980 as one of the most eventful years over a long period of Cuba's revolutionary development.

At the end of July and beginning of August, the country was visited by the President of Mexico, Jose Lopez Portillo, who thereby documented the adoption of a policy of economic resistance against the United States, which underlies his country's independent position.

Fidel Castro visited Nicaragua on the occasion of the first anniversary of the victory of the Sandinist Revolution in the country.

1980 was also a year in which the Revolution lost three distinguished personalities—Celia Sanchez Manduley, Haydee Santamaria, and Alejo Carpentier—in January, April and July respectively.

The Federation of Cuban Women held its Third Congress, the Union of Cuban Journalists its Fourth Congress, and Havana hosted the 16th Regional Conference of the FAO for Latin America. Addressing its session, Fidel Castro pointed to the difficult situation threatening mankind, if the just demands of the less developed countries are not satisfied.

The year ended with a highly significant event, the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, which opened on December 17, attended by 1,772 delegates and by representatives of 147 Communist, revolutionary and democratic parties and movements from all parts of the world.

The Congress first heard a General Report presented by the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Cuba, Fidel Castro, which included an analysis of the events that had happened in the country and in the international arena since the First Congress held in 1975.

In the course of this great assembly of Cuban Communists it was announced that the drafts of the Economic and Social Guidelines for the Five-Year Period of 1981-1985 and of a Resolution on the System of Economic Management and Control, which were unanimously adopted, had been discussed prior to the Congress by 2,592,900 workers, farmers and other working people, who had submitted 7,515 proposals of which 499 were incorporated in the final drafts and all of which were concerned with specific questions relating to different economic branches and sectors.

The Congress elected a new Central Committee of 148 members and 77 alternate members, expanded the Political Bureau to 16 members and 4 alternate members, and also elected a Secretariat of 16 members.

The year ended with the Second Regular 1980 Session of the National Assembly of People's Power, which approved the economic development plan for 1981, the Five-Year Plan for the period 1981-1985, and a law on the protection of the human environment and rational use of natural resources, as well as a number of other important legislative acts.

The task was initiated of establishing throughout the country a Militia of Territorial Troops—a Home Guard—as another demonstration of the Cuban people's resolve to resist and confront any threat which may arise from the growing aggressiveness of the U.S. administration following the Republican election victory and the occupation of the White House by a representative of the most reactionary forces in the United States.

Economy: In spite of the tenacious opposition by the United States, the Cuban economy is characterized by the planned development of all its brances and sectors. The most obvious features of this frontal attack in which the United States originally relied on its allies inside the country, were economic sabotage through a total trade embargo—still existing today—and military aggression, infiltration and subversion spurred by the CIA.

In 1958, 40% of Cuba's sugar production, 90% of electricity production and supply and the telephone service, 50% of the railways, and 23% of industry outside sugar production were controlled by U.S. capital. In addition, this capital also largely controlled Cuba's foreign trade, banks and insurance companies, thus making the island fully dependent on its powerful northern neighbour in the economic sphere as well. All in all, U.S. investments in Cuba—according to figures published by the U.S. Department of Commerce—amounted to 1,001 million dollars in 1958.

In 1959 and 1960, the first agrarian reform was carried out in Cuba as the most radical and important economic move at that time. It became the starting point for the real transformation of the island's socio-economic structure. Rents were lowered and a comprehensive process of urban reform was launched, together with a policy of full employment. In the preceding period unemployment stood at more that 600,000 workers. In a subsequent move, the banks and all large Cuban- and foreign-owned enterprises were nationalized.

The Second Agrarian Reform Act, adopted in 1963, completed the process of rural transformation. It eradicated the system of landed estates, abolished foreign ownership of land, and did away with the rural bourgeoisie. Between 1964 and 1970, the Cuban government pursued an economic strategy based on an accelerated development of crop and livestock production through the introduction of the latest techniques, a massive use of machinery and highly qualified workers, the construction of agriculture-related industry, and production of farming machinery.

Although not all of the set targets could be achieved in that period, the national economy attained considerable progress and by 1970 had acquired the material base and the qualified workers both for the production sphere—which had doubled since 1958—and for the managerial sphere, so that greater tasks could be undertaken. Perhaps one of the major achievements of that period was the experience gained with respect to the organization and realization of development plans based on an essentially correct strategy, the detection of errors and shortcomings, and the formulation of a policy designed for their correction. The basic accomplishments of that stage (1964-1970) included the best sugar crop of all times in the 1969-1970 season—8,500,000 tons—the increased capacity of water reservoirs to more than one thousand million cu.m, the extensive use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, the large-scale use of aerial dusting and spraying, the general use of artificial insemination for livestock improvement to obtain high-quality dairy cattle, increased attendance at agriculture and fishery courses, higher sugar-cane yields, introduction of mechanized sugar-cane harvesting, at first in cane cultivation and later in its cutting, a comprehensive improvement of sugar cane and sugar transport, and the introduction of a system of shipping bulk sugar, which in the aforesaid period reached the capacity of four million tons of this commodity.

As regards the non-sugar industry, a development strategy was conceived, based on the open and single-export character of the economy—sugar still represents 90% of all Cuban exports—and on the fact that the island lacks natural resources and a sufficiently large force of skilled labour. The chosen alternative was to satisfy the need of capital goods making use of Cuba's comparative advantage as a sugar exporter, and to develop those industries, which are closely tied to crop and livestock production.

In the same period, the engineering industry increased the output of farm tools and machinery and the manufacture of spare parts for the principal industries. Some 150,000,000 pesos were invested into fertilizer production projects, high-level technology was supplied to the nickel plants at Nicaro and Moa, which made it possible to double their output, the impetus given to the generation of electricity was maintained—the power industry is raising its output at the annual rate of 5.6%—and the development was accelerated of the building materials industry due to the growing pace of construction of facilities for crop and livestock production, as well as of social and other infrastructure facilities. Altogether, industrial production grew at the annual rate of 25%.

Before the Revolution, Cuba had 10,100 km of highways and roads. By 1970 this network had doubled to meet the requirements of the comprehensive socio-economic development of the country. In the same stage, dredging began of Cuba's main ports, as well as reconstruction of the wharves and breakwaters, and the construction of warehouses and access roads. The realization of all these investments was a decisive factor for the implementation of the Five-Year Plan for the period 1971-1975 and for the determination of the country's long and medium range objectives. In the course of those five years industry expanded at the annual rate of 8% and 1,400,000 new jobs were created.

In 1970, the main objectives of Cuba's economic development were outlined, which were to be achieved by 1975. The first objective was to assure the production of growing quantities of sugar as the primary export commodity. Secondly, the capacity of the other sectors of the country's crop and livestock production was to be exploited with the objective of eliminating food imports and increasing some exports of farm products; this was to be achieved by greater efficiency rather than by additional investments. Thirdly, the building industry was to be considered as the most dynamic branch of the national economy and its rapid growth was to encourage the development of the other branches. Similarly, a change in the structure of imports was envisaged as regards primary commodities, consumer goods and basic products. While in 1971 the latter accounted for 24% and consumer goods for 76% of total imports, by 1974—although the absolute volume of imports had grown—their respective percentage had changed to 18 and 82.

According to official studies and documents, the period 1971-1975 was characterized by an uniterrupted growth of the Cuban economy with 1975 being the peak year of this development.

The capitalist crisis definitely did not affect the country with all its impact because of Cuba's membership in the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance—the CMEA—since 1972 and because of its preferential bilateral agreements with the Soviet Union which pays 30 cents per pound for the sugar it imports from the island.

Moreover, the Soviet Union supplies all of Cuba's petroleum—9,500,000 tons in 1978—at low prices which in 1976 amounted to 50 dollars per ton.

In 1972, the Soviet Union agreed to postpone until 1986 the repayment of the interest-free loans Cuba had accumulated over 25 years.

It also granted Cuba interest-free credits to cover deficits in the balance of trade between the two countries in 1974 and 1975, which will also become due in 1986.

In addition, the Soviet Union lent Cuba 300,000,000 dollars to be repaid in services and goods over a period of 25 years, beginning in 1976.

In his report to the Second Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba, the Party's First Secretary, Fidel Castro listed already in 1980 the achievements scored by the country in the economic sphere in the period 1976-1980.

That five-year period was characterized by falling sugar prices which by 1979 averaged 9 cents per pound—ie. some 200 dollars per ton—and which is approximately 55% of the production cost on the world average.

This was a steep drop compared with the level achieved in the last years of the previous five year period (1971-1975), when the price of sugar averaged 30 cents per pound in 1974 and just over 21 cents in 1975.

This reduced the so-called "means of exchange" in Cuba's commercial relations with the capitalist world by 53% between 1975 and 1979.

The rates of interest were raised on the external debt and on credits obtained for the purchase of machinery, industrial plants and other goods on the world market, and so were freight rates and tariffs for the chartering merchant vessels.

Added to these external problems was the occurrence at the end of the five-year period of diseases in crop and livestock production—sugar-cane blight which damaged one total foreign-trade turnover from 56% in 1975 to 78% in 1979, with the Soviet Union having accounted for 48 and 67% of that turnover respectively.

Through the CMEA, Cuba has succeeded in spurring its programme of developing its production of sugar, citrus fruit, nickel, sugar-production machinery and computer equipment, as well as its development of science and technology.

Cuba has also joined the CMEA banking system and is participating with other member-countries in CMEA multilateral programmes.

The Cuban education and public health services have benefited from easy-term credits and grants received from other governments and international organizations.

In 1980, Cuba received technical assistance from 4,300 specialists, mostly from the socialist countries, while 11,000 Cubans provided such assistance to more than thirty developing countries.

Scientific and technical activity continued to develop with some 80 million pesos of annual investments and the involvement of close to 23,000 workers, 5,300 of them university graduates. It produced some significant results in the selection of new varieties of sugar-cane, the development of new grazing land, the development of new machinery for sugar-cane cultivation, the invention of techniques permitting better extraction of nickel and cobalt, and the manufacture of electronic equipment and computer technology.

Among the research facilities built there is the National Centre for Animal Health, which was inaugurated during the last five-year planning period, when construction began of a nuclear research centre.

Retail sales to the population were 20% higher in 1980 than in 1975.

The average diet of a Cuban represents, 2,866 calories a day and 74.5 g of proteins, which is 244 calories and 3.1 g of proteins more than in 1975.

The growing purchasing power of the population, together with the progressing electrification programme, growing national production and increased imports from the socialist countries, especially the Soviet Union, have resulted in greater distribution and sale of durable consumer goods than in the preceding five-year period.

In the period 1971-1975, Cubans bought 400,000 TV sets, 160,000 refrigerators, 890,000 radio receivers, 82,000 washing machines, and 28,000 electric fans. In the period 1976-1980, these figures had changed as follows: 770,000 TV sets, 420,000 refrigerators, 1,350,000 radio receivers, and 465,000 washing machines. This means that between 1975 and 1980, the indices per 100 electrified households have risen from 33 to 74 TV sets, from 15 to 38 refrigerators, and from 6 to 34 washing machines. As regards radio receivers per 100 households in general, the figure has risen from 42 in 1975 to 105 in 1980.

According to the general outline of the third five-year plan for the period 1981-1985, commercial exchange with the socialist countries, in particular the Soviet Union, should rise by more than 30% compared with the five-year period which ended in 1980.

The plan envisages for the next five years overall economic growth at the annual rate of approximately 5%, which is an increase in comparison with 4% average achieved in the preceding five-year period. The plan lays great stress on exports and on the replacement of imports by local products in the endeavour to reduce Cuba's dependence on other countries. The export plan envisages a rate of growth exceeding that of Cuba's GNP, while imports are to grow at an average annual rate lower than the growth of the national economy in general. Since capital investments are growing at an annual rate of between 15 and 20%, the 1981-1985 plan is basically not an investment plan. The endeavour is to complete capital investment projects currently under construction rather than to begin new capital construction. The latter will concentrate primarily on industry in the productive sphere, and in the non-productive sphere the emphasis will be on housing construction where about

200,000 new housing units are expected to be built within the next five years.

It is planned to finish approximately 500 investment projects and industrial programmes out of a total of 560 and also to complete more than 250 educational and 150 public health facilities, as well as several thousand agricultural projects.

It is envisaged that sugar production will rise by between 20 and 25% compared with the five year period which ended in 1980.

Electricity output will rise more than 50% and it is envisaged that new generation capacities of between 1,000 and 1,200 MW will be put into operation, as work will proceed on the construction of the Juragua nuclear power plant and the Centro hydro-electric plant.

With the reconstruction of the Moa and Nicaro plants and with the completion and launching of the Punta Gorda plant, nickel production will increase.

The plan calls for a 30% growth of fertilizer production and a 25% increase in the output of the pharmaceutical industry.

Production of transport vehicles will grow by more than 40% and the output of textile fabrics between 50 and 60%.

Cement production will exceed more than 4.5 million tons in 1985, and the output of the food-processing industry will grow at the average annual rate of between 4 and 4.5%.

The plan calls for a more than 20% increase in the output of meat products compared with 1980, which will improve the range of tinned meat on the market.

The fishing industry is expected to raise its gross catch at the annual rate of about 10% compared with the previous five year period.

The plan provides for the construction of 33 dams and other water projects. By 1985, the cultivated area under irrigation—with the exception of sugar-cane plantations—is expected to exceed the area under irrigation in 1980 by some 18,000 or 19,000 *caballeriacas* (1 *caballeria*—33.3 U.S. acres), while the use of fertilizers is expected by 1985 to exceed by some 40% the 1980 level. 3,500 km of farm roads will be built and so will more than 30,000 homes for farm workers.

Citrus production should be about two and a half times that achieved in the five-year period which ended in 1980. Improvements will be carried out in passenger rail transport, and more than 2,500 municipal buses will be added to the existing facilities, which should basically meet the needs of the capital city. Other urban communities will get more than 4,000 buses as well as some of those currently operating in Havana. 13,000 taxicabs will be put into service and the civil aviation fleet will receive 16 long and medium range airliners. Thirty new vessels will be added to the present merchant fleet. More than 250 km of the National Autoroute are planned, as well as more than 600 km of other highways, in addition to the reconstruction of another 1,000 kilometres of paved roads.

The telephone service is to be extended to some 84,000 lines and a coaxial cable is to be put gradually into operation with its completion planned for 1985. In addition, automatic nationwide dialing is to be introduced.

The general standard of living will steadily grow with emphasis laid on personal consumption which will rise at the annual rate of more than 4%. Social consumption—i.e. free public services—will grow at the approximate annual rate of 3%.

By 1985, per capita real income should exceed the present level by 15 to 20%. Daily food consumption is to reach 3,155 calories and 81.7 g of protein per inhabitant.

To sum up, Cuba's Third Five-Year Plan provides for a mjor improvement in the living standards of the people and for a no less important development of the national economy, since to achieve an average 5% annual economic growth under the conditions prevailing in in the world today, in the midst of the crisis through which the world economy is passing, third of the cane plantations, blue mould which for two successive years hit the tobacco crop, first 25% of it and then, in 1980, almost 90%, and, finally, African swine fever appeared in the island's two eastern provinces.

In spite of all these problems, the GNP rose in the last five years at the annual average of 4%, calculated in constant prices, while productivity of labour increased at the annual rate of 3.4 %.

In contrast to the past, exports grew in the period 1976-1980 at a faster pace than imports.

In the same period, investments amounted to 13,200 million pesos, that is about 75% more than in the period 1971-1975 and three times more than in the five-year period 1966-1970.

Of the total investments, 35% went to industry and 19% to agriculture. This contrasted with the preceding stage of development, when agriculture received 40% of all the investments made, and industry only 25 to 30%. This was in compliance with the resolution adopted by the First Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba to emphasize the industrialization process in the 1976-1980 five-year plan.

In that five-year period, sugar production was 25% higher than in the five-year period which preceded it, and in 1979 the second largest crop in Cuban history—7,992,000 tons—was harvested.

Considerable savings in petroleum consumption were achieved in the harvesting operations, while 968 million pesos were invested in the equipment, expansion and modernization of more than 40 sugar-producing centres.

The pay of sugar-industry workers was raised by 15% and old-age pensions were introduced.

Agricultural and livestock production, including sugar-cane production, grew at the annual rate of 3.5%.

In 1975, 54,000 tractors worked in the fields. By 1980 their number had grown to 70,000 and they had a greater average pwoer.

The use of chemical fertilizers, which amounted to 959,000 tons in 1975, reached 1,574,000 tons in 1980, while in the same period the use of pesticides rose from 7,400 tons to more than 11,000, and that of herbicides from 11,500 to more than 16,000 tons.

Production of citrus fruit grew by 60% compared with the preceding five-year period and by 1980 reached more than 400,000 tons, of which 200,000 tons were exported.

While in the period 1971-1975, the production of fresh milk was about 2,440 million litres, in the subsequent period of 1976-1980, 3,700 million litres were produced, which represents an increase of 54%.

Production of pork went up to 290,000 tons, while poultry production doubled in comparison with the preceding five-year period and that of eggs exceeded 2,000 million in 1980.

It should be underlined that in the period 1976-1980, 5,600 university students and 15,000 secondary vocational school students graduated with agriculture and livestock production as their specialization.

Gross industrial production grew at the annual rate of 5% and production of electric power by 8.7% annually.

The output of nickel remained at the same level as in the period 1971-1975 (37 million tons annually) and reconstruction is being carried out of the Nicaro and Moa facilities, while two additional plants are under construction, each with the annual capacity of 30,000 tons.

The steel-working industry has grown at the annual rate of 6.7%.

In the period 1976-1980, civil engineering projects worth 7,000 million pesos were built, that is 2,800 million pesos more than in the preceding period. Hydrological works were expanded by 29% and 836 km of railway lines were built, just as 7,800 km of motorways, highways and roads, including 334 km of the National Autoroute.

Educational facilities were doubled. While in the preceding period (1971-1975) school facilities had been built for 180,000 students of secondary schools, between 1976 and 1980 these facilities were built for more than 400,000 students. Two hundred creches were completed and the hospital capacity increased by 3,000 beds through the construction of four new hospitals and expansion of three existing ones. Seventy other public health facilities were built and so were twenty-two new tourist hotels.

In the field of housing construction, the level established by the previous five-year plan (approximately 83,000 units) was maintained. 3,360 km of aqueducts and 335 km of sewers were built.

The volume of transport grew by 31%. Freight turnover in Cuba's ports established an all-time record in 1980 with 35 million tons of cargo loaded and unloaded. 25 million tons were the share of foreign trade and 10 million tons of coastal shipping.

Cuba's merchant fleet was expanded by 23 cargo vessels and its deadweight increased from 550,000 tons in 1975 to 815,000 tons in 1980.

Both freight and passenger railway traffic grew in volume. The railways received 102 new heavy locomotives and 1,860 freight wagons and passenger coaches, and 750 km of trunk lines were reconstructed.

The volume of road transport increased from 7,700,000 tons in 1975 to 15,000,000 tons in 1980, which represents the annual growth rate of almost 14%. 3,987 new lorries were added to this service.

Bus transport was some 17% greater in volume in 1980 than it was in 1975, due to the addition to the national and local bus scrvuces of 10,800 new vehicles over the past five years, of which more than 9,000 were of Cuban manufacture.

In air transport, the number of passengers flown on international lines trebled to reach 194,000 in 1980, and seven new airliners were added to the existing fleet.

The output of the principal branches of the food industry grew by 14%.

Light industry expanded its production by 23%. The output of woven fabrics was more than 750 million sq.m compared with 600 million in the preceding five-year period. 21 million pars of footwear were produced in 1980, but this is still not enough. More than 400 million pesos have been invested in the shoe industry.

The total fish catch was 930,000 tons, which is 29% more than in the period1971-1975. The establishment of the two hundred mile limit of territorial waters and the annulment of fishery conventions have limited the operational scope of the high-seas fishing fleet. In the period 1976-1980, the fishing industry exceeded in production the value of 400 million pesos. It received investments of more than 600 million pesos and its high-seas fleet was expanded by 21 large trawlers, four refrigeration ships and a fuel-supply vessel.

As regards foreign trade, the last five-year period saw an improvement in the trading conditions with the socialist countries, while a number of measures were taken to lessen, as much as possible, the negative effects of the world economic crisis; a decisive contribution in this respect were the agreements adopted within the framework of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) with regard to credits, pricing, coordination of the five-year economic plans of the member-countries, and supply of raw-materials and fuels.

Convertible-currency imports were reduced to the minimum and the effort was made to shift purchases to the socialist area. The results were favourable.

All these moves increased the participation of the CMEA member-countries in Cuba's under the conditions of a developing country subjected to an economic blockade and aggression by U.S. imperialism, is a difficult task whose realization will represent another success for the Cuban revolution and people.

The basic objective of the country's economic and social development up to the year 2000 is to complete the construction of the technical and material foundations of socialism through socialist industrialization and the steady growth of efficiency of social production, the progressive development of the national economy towards a rational structure of production which will make possible a relatively high and constant rate of growth, the promotion of economic specialization, national and international cooperation and integgration, the growing satisfaction of the material and spiritual needs of the people, and the comprehensive development of man. This should promote the gradual approach of Cuba's development to the level of the European members of the CMEA.

The aforesaid objectives indicate as the preferential branches of industrial development the sugar industry, mining and metallurgy, the engineering, electronics and chemical industries, as well as the consumer goods industry.

Under these long-range plans, agricultural production is to maintain its position as one of the key elements of the Cuban economy. Here, the prospects up to the year 2000 also envisage the possibility of forming three large integrated inter-branch production complexes—the cultivation and processing of sugar cane, agriculture and food-manufacture, and the mining-metallurgy—engineering complex.

In addition, the long-range plan envisages the development of many factors, such as a build-up of Cuba's energy and natural resources, scientific and technological progress, the labour force, the education of technical personnel and specialists, a growing volume of personal consumption, just as its quality and range, growing food consumpton, a comprehensive development of the individual, and, for this purpose, development of public health services and of the educational system.

Cuba's external economic relations should become a factor stimulating this development, with the accent placed on the growth of both traditional and non-traditional exports.

A prominent place is held in Cuba's economic prospects up to the year 2000 by expansion of economic, scientific and technological integration within the framework of the CMEA in particular with the Soviet Union, as well as by active participation in production specialization and cooperation, and by expansion of economic relations with other developing countries, especially with those of Latin America and the Caribbean area, taking into account the positive trend of national recovery of the natural resources by those countries, which creates the possibility of Cuba's participation in the trade and economic unions being formed in this region.

In the process of drawing up all these prospects up to the year 2000, the idea was also raised to realize—in cooperation with other socialist countries—a General Plan of Economic and Social Development, which would help determine the most appropriate variant of large-scale development, draw up the programmes and concrete means of ensuring its realization, and define the main areas where Cuba can participate in the international socialist division of labour.

Government: "The Republic of Cuba is a socialist state of workers and peasants and other manual and intellectual workers," according to Article 1 of the Constitution of the Republic.

The country is politically and administratively divided into 14 provinces and 169 townships among which the Island of Youth is a special township under the direct control of the central government.

All power in the state belongs to the working people who exercise it through the Assemblies of People's Power and other state bodies derived from them, or do so directly. The power of the working people is based on the firm alliance of the working class and the peasants and other working people of the towns and villages under the leadership of the working class. The Communist Party of Cuba, the organized Marxist-Leninist vanguard of the working class, is the supreme leading force in society and the state, which organizes and directs the common effort towards the construction of socialism and of a communist society.

The period from January 1959, when the Cuban Revolutionary Government assumed power, until the middle of the 1970s was an interim period as regards the functioning of the government. This period extended through the armed and economic aggression against Cuba by the United States. At the same time, the country passed through a stage of profound economic and social changes.

1970 saw the beginning of a process of consolidation of the Communist Party of Cuba (PCC), of the organizations of the people and of the administrative apparatus of the state.

In the period between the first and second Congresses of the PCC, i.e. between 1975 and 1980, the revolutionary state scored some important advances in the institutional sphere.

On February 24, 1976, the anniversary of the Call for Independence in 1895, a Socialist Constitution was enacted, which had been approved in a referendum by 97.7% of the 98% of the electorate, who went to the polls.

In the course of the same year, major changes were carried out in the political administration division of the country, when 15 provinces and a special township directly subordinated to the central government replaced the original six provinces. At the same time, the former 407 townships were reduced to 169, and 38 regions were abolished, which in the past had existed as an intermediary link between the townships and the provinces.

Organs of People's Power were established throughout the country and elections were held of delegates and deputies to the respective Assemblies. This was the most important step taken by the Revolution in the process of building the institutional structure of the state.

More than 10,000 delegates elected democratically to the People's Assemblies of the 169 townships and constantly controlled by their constituents represent the people in governing the respective townships, have the power to appoint and recall the administrative officials in the townships, and make the basic decisions in local affairs.

They also elect, mostly from their own ranks, delegates who form the Provincial Assemblies, as well as the deputies who constitute the National Assembly, the supreme body in the state, which represents and expresses the sovereign will of all the working people. It is moreover, the only body with constitutional and legislative authority in the country and is elected for a term of five years. The Nation Assembly elects from among its 481 members a State Council consisting of a President, a First Vice-President, five Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and twenty-three other members. The Council is accountable to the Assembly for all its work. Between the Assembly's two regular annual sessions, the Counil represents the Assembly, implements its decisions and exercises the other duties assigned to it by the Constitution. It has a collegiate character and is the supreme representative of the Cuban state both nationally and internationally.

In order to adjust the functioning of the government to the constitutional provisions and to the needs raised by the introduction of a system of economic control and planning, the central administration of the state was reorganized in 1976; it is made up of a Council of Ministers, its Executive Committee and central agencies whose original number was 43, but which were reduced to 35 in the second stage of rationalization, instituted in January 1980. A state arbitration agency was established in the same process.

The President of the State Council is the head of state and government, which he both represents and whose general policy he directs. In case of his illness, absence or death, his duties are assumed by the First Vice-President.

New central agencies have been established, such as the State Committees for Finance, Prices, Statistics, Technical and Material Supplies, and Standardization, as well as a Computing Institute, which play an important role in the country's system of economic management and planning.

The courts form a system of state organs functionally independent of any other organs and hierarchically subordinated only to the National Assembly of People's Power. The People's Supreme Court exercises supreme judicial authority and its decisions in this respect are final. The principal duties of the courts include those of upholding and strengthening socialist legality, safeguarding the country's economic, social and political system, protection of socialist and individual property, and protection of the legitimate rights and interests of institutions and individuals In their duty of administering justice, judges are independent and are bound only by the provisions of the law. They submit an account of their work to their constitutents at least once a year.

The Office of Attorney General of the Republic is an authority subordinated only to the National Assembly of People's Power and to the State Council, from which it gets direct instructions. Its head and his deputies are elected and may be recalled by the National Assembly to which they must submit an annual account. Under the Constitution, its provisions and the laws of the socialist state are a legal expression of the socialist relations of production and of the interests and the will of the working people. It stipulates that the Cuban socialist state exercises sovereignty over the entire national territory and its natural and living resources on the sea bed and its subsoil, as well as those existing in the waters extending from the coasts to the limits of territorial waters, set by law in conformity with international practice.

Cuba has embraced the principles of proletarian internationalism and militant solidarity of peoples. It condemns both direct and indirect imperialist intervention in the internal or external affairs of any state, as well as any form of economic pressure and interference or threat to its integrity or to the political, economic and cultural affairs of other nations. It bases its international relations on the principles of equality of the rights, sovereignty and independence of states, and of mutual interest, and in its relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries proceeds from their common objectives of construction of a new society, fraternal friendship, and mutual cooperation and assistance.

Armed forces: The responsibility for the defence of the socialist state and for the maintenance of internal order rests on the Ministry of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (MINIFAR) and the Ministry of the Interior (MININT). Their history dates back to December 2, 1956, to the landing of the yacht "Granma", when the guerillas emerged, who formed the core of the Rebel Army and then of the Revolutionary Armed Forces (FAR).

The MINIFAR has a High Command which directs the air, naval and ground forces. In other words, it also controls the Air and Air Defence Force and the Navy, as well as the Civil Defence Militia and the Youth Army of Labour.

The latter was formed in 1973 as an organization for assisting production and as a first defence reserve force. Its members are young men 18 to 25 years old who work in agriculture and industry, while undergoing technical, political and military training.

A system has been established, which links this service for graduates of vocational and pre-university schools with the fulfilment of their active military service and their subsequent enrollment in higher education. This system makes it possible to use as a stimulus in many cases a reduction of the term of military service down to one year and to facilitate the possibility of pursuing civilian study at university level. This has greatly helped the training of soldiers and has also benefited the universities which are getting young men who are much more comprehensively developed thanks to their military service.

It was for this purpose, that the Society for Patriotic and Military Education was established. Its objective is to prepare the younger generation for service in the military, to raise boys and girls in the militant traditions of the people and in support of the FAR through defence-related sports and through patriotic and military activities.

The Youth Army of Labour has become something of a school where thousands of young people are being developed through the hard struggle of daily work under difficult conditions, and continues to make an important contribution to the national economy, while being organized as a military force.

During the five-year period 1976-1980, members of the Youth Army of Labour cut 3,000 million *arrobas* of sugar cane (one *arroba* equals 25 pounds), i.e. roughly one fifth of the total quantity cut manually in all of Cuba, and made an outstanding contribution to the construction of educational facilities as well as to work on the central railway line, of which they built a stretch of 422 km.

A vitally important project undertaken at the end of the 1976-1980 period was the formation of the Militias of Territorial Troops—the Home Guards—which together with the regular army units and the reserves are to constitute a great people's army of the Revolution, whose creation was announced on May 1, 1980, in the face of U.S. military threats and manoeuvres around Cuba.

The Ministry of the Interior (MININT) is a firm, unswerving and powerful force which defends the interests of the Revolution and the people. This Ministry has under its control the security corps and the Frontier Guards, the National Revolutionary Police, and other, auxiliary forces, including the fire brigades.

Organizations: The Communist Party of Cuba (PCC) is the supreme leader of Cuban society, which emerged from the close unity of all the revolutionary forces that, rallied under the leadership of Fidel Castro, are realizing the historical task of building socialism and communism.

In its ideological orientation, the PCC proclaims its adherence to the legacy of Marx, Engels and Lenin, and employs as the decisive experience for its own development and consolidation, as well as for the Cuban Revolution, the lessons of the October 1917 Revolution which, under the leadership of V.I. Lenin in the Soviet Union, changed the course of world history.

The legacy of the militant traditions of the Cuban people during their more than a century struggle, which included, among others, the example and the ideas of the leaders of the wars for national independence, Marti, Maceo and Gomez, provides the basis for this historical development.

The period between the First and the Second Congresses of the PCC in 1975 and 1980 respectively was one of a broad process of growth, in which the PCC membership, which totalled 211,642 full members and candidates in December 1975, grew to 434,143 in July 1980. This means that in the course of that five-year period the PCC membership doubled.

Workers directly involved in production and the service industry, who in December 1975 represented 36.3% of the PCC membership, constituted 47.3% of all PCC members in 1980. In absolute figures their number has grown more than 2.9 times compared with 1975.

work standards were put into effect, and 8% more workers are paid their wages according to these performance standards. 1,120,000 workers are already paid piece-work wages and more than half a million have bonuses included in their pay.

At the end of the period 1976-1980, a general wage reform was approved, which in its initial stage benefited more than a million workers and which, when fully implemented, will represent an annual wage increase of some 670 million pesos.

The employment of women passed the 27% mark in 1975 to reach 32% in 1980.

A law was enacted on safety and hygiene at work, and an Institute of Industrial Safety and Medicine was established. A Social Security Act was adopted, which has improved social security benefits and the system of social welfare.

The number of recipients of social security benefits has risen by more than 150,000 to reach the total figure of close to 700,000. 715 million pesos were allocated for this purpose in 1980, which is 122 million more than in 1975.

The Federation of Cuban Women (FMC), founded on August 23, 1960, had 2,420,000 members in 1980.

The Federation plays a key role in the struggle for women's equality and their active participation in the economic, political and social life of the country.

Some of the most important objectives pursued by the FMC include the establishment of creches, mother-and-child clinics, courses to raise the qualification of women workers and their cultural and technical advancement, as well as the involvement of women in the work process.

77,000 women were employed in technical jobs in the period 1975-1980, which represents 60.2% of all workers newly employed in such work nationally and 55% of new women workers in the five-year period 1976-1980.

32% of Cuba's total labour force are women. Women constitute 42.7% of workers who study during employment, 42.7% of elected trade union officials in enterprise branches and 32.6% of trade union officials at higher levels. More than 200,000 housewives have passed the sixth grade and 1,498,000 women have joined the Movement of Mothers Struggling for Education.

Members of the FMC have greatly contributed to the struggle for the ninth grade, to sugar cane, coffee, and tobacco harvests, as well as to the harvesting of other important crops. Women bear a large part of the burden of social work aimed at crime prevention, as well as of the work of sanitary brigades, of vaccination of five-year-old children, and other important tasks.

27.7% of the FMC cadres have graduated from basic and medium-level courses of the Party Schools or from the Party's "Fe del Valle" School, which is also being attended by women from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The National Association of Small Farmers (ANAP) was founded on May 17, 1961, and has 192,646 members throughout the country, who are associated in 3,507 basic organizations, 1,017 of which are agricultural cooperatives, 2,180 credit and service cooperatives, and 310 are village associations.

Individual peasants continue to play a significant role in the production of such crops as tobacco (79% of total production), coffee (60%), and food and garden vegetables (47%). They keep 27% of Cuba's livestock and grow 18% of its sugar cane. The peasants organize brigades of cane cutters for the sugar cane harvest, which form a part of the movements of Millionair Brigades.

ANAP has been a decisive factor in the process of incorporating peasants in agricultural cooperatives and in the implementation of state plans of productions, the two higher forms of production in socialist agriculture. Both, peasants farming individually and peasants who work in cooperatives, receive technical and material assistance from the state. Their right to property and respect for their preference for individual or collective production are recognized and guaranteed by the constitution.

In the third quarter of 1980, there were 26,454 cooperative farmers in Cuba, more than 30% of them women.

In the agricultural sector, too, the sixth grade campaign has been successful and thus far already 31,376 peasants have passed through this educational level.

The Federation of Secondary School Students (FEEM) was founded on December 6, 1970, and associates some half a million boys and girls from secondary-level educational institutions.

One of the activities on which the FEEM has centred its attention together with the Federation of University Students (FEU) has been a combination of study and work, as well as the recruitment of youth for the Manuel Ascuence Domenech Educational Detachment.

The Union of Cuban Pioneers (UPC) which bears the name of Cuba's national hero Jose Marti, completed in the five-year period ending in 1980 its process of expansion up to the ninth grade and thereby enlarged its membership to the total of 2,200,000. The UPC was founded on April 4, 1961, and has the character of a mass organization.

The Union of Cuban Writers and Artists (UNEAC) has already held its second congress and pursues consistently its work of promoting artistic and literary activities in the country in close collaboration with cultural organizations. It has its branches in various provinces.

The Union of Cuban Journalists (UPEC) held its Fourth Congress in March 1980 under the slogan "For analytical, militant and creative journalism". According to a report presented to the congress, UPEC membership numbers at present 2,865 journalists whose average age is between 36 and 40 years. This figure includes 657 women. UPEC is a member of the International Organization of Journalists (IOJ) and of the Latin American Federation of Journalists (FELAP). It is headed by an Executive Bureau of eight members and a National Secretariat of seventeen members and five alternate members.

In the course of the past five years, a Union of Jurists and National Association of Cuban Economists were founded, representing two important professional groups which play an ever greater role in the development of society.

Culture, education and sports: Cuba has a rich cultural heritage formed by two principle currents which over the course of time have shaped its national character. One is the European current, especially the Spanish trend, which emerged as the direct result of the colonization process, while the other, African current, has its source in the introduction of African slaves as labour for the sugar industry in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Today, development is being encouraged of art which should be national in form, without excluding the best contributions of world culture, and which by its socialist content directly reflects the reality of the country. The disappearance of the class society and the creation of new economic, political, social and educational structures have been paralleled by the emergence of a powerful cultural and artistic movement, and art has ceased to be a privilege of the minority.

In April 1971, the First Congress of Education and Culture took place, at which teachers, writers and artists in general re-asserted their intention to strive for the expansion and deepening of culture for the masses of the people and for turning art into an instrument of the revolution.

The establishment of a Ministry of Culture at the end of 1976 was a major step in expanding Cuban cultural activity and improving its quality.

People's Cultural Councils have been established throughout the country as mechanisms

Membership of women in the PCC has risen from 14.1% in December 1975 to 19.1% in July 1980

Moreover, 35.5% of the new members who joined the PCC in the course of the five-year period which ended in 1980 were members of the Union of Young Communists (UJC).

On January 1, 1976, new statutes of the PCC went into effect following their approval by the First Congress, together with the PCC Rules which elaborate and ensure the implementation of the provisions contained in the statutes.

The Party Schools, which marked their 20th anniversary in 1980, played a most positive role in the political and ideological training of the party cadres. In the period 1976-1980, 24,512 cadres graduated from these schools, and 519 of them obtained the academic degree Licentiate in Social Sciences

In the same five-year period, 31,324 members and candidates of the PCC passed through courses in Marxist-Leninist theory. 16,034 of them graduated from the basic courses provided by the Provincial Party Schools and 65,290 graduated from the Centres of Politico-Ideological Education.

A considerable advance has been made in the educational standard of the PCC cadres. At the First Congress in 1975 it was agreed that a majority of these cadres should acquire higher secondary education. At the end of the 1976-1980 period 75.5% of them have this education, compared with 16% who had mastered it in 1975.

The principles of collective leadership are being firmly applied in the highest organs of the Party. For many years now, countless sessions of the Political Bureau and the Secretariat have been held, just as plenary sessions of the Central Committee, at which collective analyses have been made of a great variety of state, party and international matters. No important question is decided by any other than this method.

In the years that have passed since the First Congress of the PCC in 1975, Cuba has defeated campaigns of denigration waged by its enemies about such events of great magnitude, as for example, the Eleventh World Festival of Youth and Students, the Sixth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the 60th Anniversary of the October Revolution, the Marches of the Militant People following the events at the Peruvian and Venezuelan embassies, or the first Soviet-Cuban joint space flight.

A stimulus was given throughout the country to a movement of history activists and great emphasis was placed on the work of revolutionary orientation on the principles of proletarian internationalism with the intention of projecting abroad the true image of the Cuban Revolution, showing its successes, deficiencies and problems, as well as Cuba's socialist achievements in the economic and social spheres.

The PCC today has a system of 7,000 non-professional lecturers who have done much to inform the Party cadres and members about topical domestic and foreign problems, as well as economic, scientific, cultural, political and, quite naturally, ideological matters requiring their attention.

The Union of Young Cuban Communists (UJC) is the youth organization of the PCC, which leads the mass of young people with whom it works directly or through its individual groupings. It was established on April 4, 1962, when this name was adopted by the then Association of Rebel Youth within which had rallied other revolutionary youth groups with the objective of forming a united and single front.

The principle mission of the UJC is the involvement of youth in the pursuit of revolutionary tasks, promotion of their comprehensive communist education, and their preparation for joining the Communist Party.

Furthermore, its duties include those of cultivating in the conscience of youth the moral precepts of socialism and—through the Union of Cuban Pioneers—of pursuing and developing patriotic and communist education among children.

At the end of the five-year period 1976-1980, the UJC had 442,000 members and candidates, that is 83,000 more than it had in 1975. Of all these UJC members, 79,000 are of working class origin. The age limit for membership of the organization was extended to thirty years.

Young women constitute at present 41.8% of the total membership of the UJC, compared with barely 30% in 1975.

The UJC has been working on the realization of tasks entrusted to it in the economic development of the country. Outstanding in this respect has been the Movement of Shock Projects; seven such projects were completed in 1980, and work is under way on 17 at the present. Youth Technical Brigades have been strengthened and already associate more than 100,000 young people.

The Committees for the Defence of the Revolution have the largest number of members of any mass organization in the whole country—5,321,000.

The Committees were established on September 28, 1960, and have fulfilled with great effectiveness their role of people's vigilance and militancy in confrontation with the enemies of the Revolution.

Subsequently they extended their activities into the areas of the national economy, public health (where their cooperation is irreplaceable), education and others.

The Committees, which held their First Congress in 1977, are organized according to street blocks, quarters, townships and provinces throughout the island.

The Centre of Cuban Workers (CTC) associates 2,382,000 workers, who represent 97.1% of the total active labour force in the country.

In the last five-year period the CTC held its 14th Congress whose decisions set the lines of trade union work, perfecting the unions' internal structure and making a strenuous effort for the political, cultural and technical advancement of the workers.

The CTC has made a decisive contribution to the sugar cane harvest, to the promotion of socialist emulation, to the struggle for labour discipline, the observance of Red Sundays in homage to such notable dates as anniversaries of the October Revolution and other events. Millions of workers have been taking part in these mobilization efforts.

In 1976, a National Association of Innovators and Improvers was founded. Under trade union guidance its more than 33,000 members realized in the last five-year period 14,872 innovations which resulted in economic savings of 127,228,000 pesos.

In the area of cultural and technical advancement, the Sixth Grade campaign reached its peak and already by October 1980, 862,500 adult workers had graduated, and in December of the same year their number had risen to 900,000. In the course of the revolutionary period, from 1959 to the present, 1,397,636 working men and women have graduated from the sixth grade throughout the country.

In the last five-year period, 34,567 trade union cadres passed through trade union schools at all levels, and trade union and political experiences were shared with 414 trade unionists from Latin America, the Caribbean area, and Africa.

1,589,000 workers took part in the Workers' Sports Games in 1980, compared with the participation of 620,934 working men and women in the same event in 1976.

Cuban workers are represented in collective governmental bodies, ranging from the Council of Ministers down to the managerial councils in individual enterprises. The latter have their say in the consideration of the economic plans of every enterprise. Moreover, the Secretary General of the CTC was elected alternate member of the Political Bureau of the PCC at the Party's Second Congress.

As regards the labour and social security policy pursued by the government, 725,000 of social coordination and stimulus. There are 117 Houses of Culture spread throughout the country and there is a rapid development in art education through the establishment of new vocational art schools, eight of which are under construction. There are 16 elementary art schools, 21 at the secondary level, and a university-level Institute of the Arts. Their total enrollment is over 5,000.

The amateur art movement has consolidated and today has already some 33,000 groups with a total membership of over a quarter of a million (in 1975 there were 18,000 groups with a total of 200,000 members).

The prestige of the Cuban National Ballet Company has been steadily rising and for several years now, international ballet festivals have been held in Cuba, which enjoy great respect throughout the world and which attract an ever greater number of dancers from abroad.

The theatre has played an extremely important role especially in the rural areas as an instrument of social changes through the presentation of plays which deal with the specific problems and situations in individual communities. Such performances frequently turn the spectators into actors and, on some occasions, into promoters of solutions of some of these problems. Here, the Escambray theatrical group has done outstanding work.

Cinematography, too, has done much for the victory of the revolution. In the course 20 years, a film industry was created, which is subordinated to the Cuban Institute of Film Art and Industry (ICAIC) and which has won a number of international awards for both full-length and short films. In the past five years the Cuban film industry produced 36 full-length features, 196 documentaries, 200 newsreels and 72 animated pictures, and has built 41 new cinemas.

An important part of the ICAIC work has been the use of 629 mobile units to bring the cinema to the remotest rural parts. When the revolution prevailed in 1959, many peasant families had never even heard about films.

Book publishing is truly formidable in Cuba when compared with the situation existing prior to the revolution. The demand for books among the Cuban people since 1959 and the encouragement given to cultural activities have made it possible to publish 5,000 book titles in a total edition of more than 200 million copies in the period 1976-1980, which has raised the average of books per reader from 4.1 in 1975 to 6 in 1980. 489 titles of books for children were published in the same period in a total edition of 29 million copies. Cuba has a network of over 100 major libraries and more than 700 smaller ones, as well as of some 200 bookshops, which cover the whole territory of the country.

In the course of the last five-year period, 8 million gramophone records and 2,600,000 musical instruments were produced. October 20, was proclaimed the Day of Culture.

The National Assembly enacted a law protecting the cultural heritage of the nation, a law on national and local monuments, a law on municipal museums, and a copyright law, and restoration is being planned of the historical centre of Old Havana.

There are 78 museums in Cuba, more than 40 of which were established in the period 1976-1980.

Hundreds of Cuban artists have appeared abroad and have won awards and prizes in international competitions.

One of the main literary prizes in the Spanish-speaking world, the Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra Prize, was awarded to the Cuban writer Alejo Carpentier.

The House of the Americas has continued to grow in prestige on the American continent and throughout the world, the award of its annual prizes is a great international cultural event.

Cuban radio has five national and fourteen provincial networks and about thirty local stations. There are two television channels which broadcast on a nationwide scale and in colour. A satellite communication relay station was inaugurated in 1973, which permits two-way live radio and television communication with Europe.

Cuba has made enormous progress in the field of education since January 1959, when the Cuban revolution prevailed. At that time, school attendance by children six to fourteen years old amounted to 55%. Citizens over fifteen had an average of less than three years formal schooling. There were one million absolute illiterates and more than a million semi-literates, 600,000 children were without schools, 10,000 teachers were unemployed, while those with jobs were exposed to discrimination. The budget of the Ministry of Education for school expenditure and investment was 79,400,000 pesos and was one of the principle sources of embezzlement by government officials.

Under Law No.561, enacted in September 1959, the Revolutionary Government formed 10,000 new classrooms throughout the country. In December of the same year, the first comprehensive educational reform was adopted and 69 former military barracks of the Batista dictatorship were converted into schools.

In 1961, a literacy campaign was launched, in which more than 270,000 individuals took part in which 707,000 adult men and women learned to read and write. In December of that year Cuba was proclaimed in the presence of UNESCO representatives the first Latin American territory free of illiteracy.

A follow-up campaign was then launched, just as an education system for workers and peasants, and a system of workers' secondary education and workers' faculties which were tied to higher education. A system of adult education was also instituted in this manner.

A law nationalizing the educational system was passed on June 6, 1962, which did away with private schools and made education free.

In the same year, thousands of college students went to the mountainous areas of the country to pick coffee beans, thereby initiating the principle that study should be combined with work, which was subsequently applied generally at secondary schools in urban areas and is known as "School in the Countryside". Students and their teachers spend 45 days in farming areas where they do agricultural work according to their age and sex.

During the 1968-1969 school term, the first experience was gained with these Schools in the Countryside at the secondary level as a method of general application of the study-work principle and as the best means of shaping a well-rounded personality. At present, this principle is being asserted throughout Cuba's educational system in different forms.

In Cuba, education is free at all types and levels of school.

In the period 1976-1980, 1,293,000 pupils passed through the sixth grade of the National Educational System (i.e. almost double the number of such graduates in the preceding five-year period), 575,000 students graduated from basic secondary schools (7.2 times more), 105,000 students graduated from pre-university preparatory schools (4.4 times more), 194,000 skilled workers and middle-level technicians completed their training (5 times more), 62,700 students graduated from higher educational institutions (3 times more), and 67,900 elementary school teachers also graduated (3.6 times more).

Practically all pupils who completed their sixth-grade education continued their studies.

In the course of the same five-year period, 25,700 teachers for basic secondary schools graduated, just as 4,800 physical training teachers, 115,000 adults completed their secondary education while employed, and 41,000 students graduated from the Workers and Peasants' Faculty.

There are approximately 16,000 foreign students holding scholarships in Cuba, and currently there is one student for every 2.83 inhabitants of the country.

More than 970 educational facilities have been built and at the end of the last five-year plan, in 1980, there were 216,900 teachers and professors.

In the same period, a Ministry of Higher Education was established, which in 1980 was in charge of 39 educational institutions with an enrollment of 200,000 students.

The capacity of day-care centres for children was increased from 42,000 to 87,000.

The educational budget for 1980 amounted to 1,340 million pesos, which means that 137 pesos were spent on education per inhabitant, that is 16 times more than before the revolution.

More than 3,500 teachers, professors and lecturers provide their internationalist services in 20 countries, most of them forming the Che Guevara Detachment and the contingents of elementary school teachers, bearing the names of Frank Pais and Augusto Cesar Sandino

Cuban sport has scored noteworthy successes between 1959 and the present.

Boxing, track and field events, volleyball, basketball and other sports were highly successful for Cuban athletes on many occasions. Moreover, Cuba has maintained its supremacy in amateur baseball.

In boxing, Teofilo Stevenson became twice world amateur heavy-weight champion (in 1974 and 1978) and three times Olympic champion (at the Olympic Games in Munich, Montreal and Moscow in 1972, 1976 and 1980 respectively), which is a feat never before achieved by any boxer in his category. Alberto Juantorena has excelled in athletics, winning gold metals in the 400 and 800 metre events at the Olympic Games in Montreal in 1976 in an exceptional performance in which he also broke the world record in the 800 metres and which he subsequently broke again in Sofia, Bulgaria, in 1977. Alejandro Casanas has excelled in the 110 m hurdles, just as the sprinter Silvio Leonard and especially the javelin thrower Maria Caridad Colon, the first Latin American woman ever to win an Olympic gold medal in this event, at the Olympic Games in Moscow in 1980.

The number of persons actively engaged in sports doubled in the period 1976-1980.

94 sports facilities were built and seven schools for sports talents were inaugurated, as well as five specialized training centres. 4,800 middle-level technicians graduated, as well as the first 663 at the superior level. The sports industry turned out products worth just over 11 million pesos in 1980.

Cuba holds first place in the Central American Games and second place in the Pan-American Games. At the Olympic Games, Cuba has risen from 14th place in 1972 to 8th place in 1976 and 4th place in 1980, although at the last Olympics, held in Moscow some athletic powers from the capitalist world were missing.

Cuba provides technical assistance in the field of sports to more than 30 countries, and some 200 young people from 14 nations study at sports training centres in Cuba.

One field which has greatly developed in Cuba is chess. Before the revolution there were only National Masters in the country, but today there are five Grand Masters and 19 International Masters in addition to a growing number of National Masters and experts, and to their large and effective participation in many international chess tournaments.

The organization which controls sports activities in the country is the National Institute of Sports, Physical Training and Recreation (INDER), which was founded on February 21, 1961.

In 1958, the national budget provided only a million pesos for sports and about 1,000 physical training teachers were jobless. At the present, some 50 million pesos are allocated annually for the development of sports, and more than 8,000 physical training teachers work in the various fields of sport.

Cuba is a member of more than 80 international sports organizations and periodically holds workers', military and school sports games with large-scale participation. Admission to all sports events is free.

Public health: In Cuba, national health is the responsibility of the state. All public health services are free and are accessible to all people at all levels, from dispensaries and polyclinics of different complexity and size to ultra-modern hospitals and highly specialized medical facilities. Even the remotest parts of the country are covered by a network of facilities providing medical assistance to their population. In general, the public health service is preventive rather than therapeutic in its character, although neither aspect is detrimental to the other. Active participation by the people and their organizations adds to the successful completion of vaccination and/or preventive examination projects of different types. Gone are those epidemic and endemic diseases which earlier used to be a scourge especially of the very poor. For example, poliomyelitis was eliminated in 1963 and five years later malaria was virtually eradicated, while diphtheria's turn came in 1971, and today there is a very low incidence of tetanus, gastroenteritis, tuberculosis and measles. Mother-and-child care has been given special attention and its effectiveness is reflected especially in a drop in infant and maternal mortality which in 1976 was only 2.28% of live-born infants and 0.055% of the mothers. An average of nine maternity consultations are given during pregnancy. These figures place Cuba among the most advanced countries in this aspect of public health. The general mortality rate is 0.6% per capita, and average life expectancy was 70 years in 1976, compared with 53 years in 1953. According to data compiled in 1976, the principle causes of death in that year were heart disease, cancer and cerebral haemorrhage .

In 1958, prior to the revolution, public health statistics showed 6% mortality rate among live-born infants, which was nearly triple the figure of 1976. The same statistics reported 3,000 cases of malaria registered in health centres, not to mention untreated cases. There were also 200 to 300 cases of poliomyelitis reported every year and more than 300 cases of tetanus. Gastroenteritis was one of the five main causes of death among children.

Public health is one of the areas where the greatest progress has been achieved in Cuba's revolutionary process, and in the past five-year period it continued to expand and improve its services.

Four new hospitals were completed and three were expanded, adding 3,000 beds to the total hospital capacity of the country, so that in 1980 there were 4.9 hospital beds per thousand inhabitants.

In the course of the period 1976-1980, 50 polyclinics, 25 dental clinics, 17 old-age nursing homes and 12 homes for the physically handicapped were built and put into operation. Medical consultations per inhabitant rose from 4.1 in 1975 to 4.6 in 1980, and the per capita number of dental check-ups from 0.8 to 1.0 respectively.

The mortality rate of infants up to one year of age dropped from 27.3 per every thousand live-born babies in 1975 to 19.3 in 1979, while the mortality rate of children one to four years old was cut by ten per cent in the same period. The maternal mortality rate dropped from 68.4 per 100,000 live births to 47.4 in 1979.

The life expectancy of a Cuban born today is 74 years for women, more than 71 years for men, and close to 73 years in general. At the end of the previous five-year planning period, which ended in 1975, average life expectancy was 70 years.

In 1975, there was one doctor for every thousand inhabitants. In 1980 there was one for every 626 inhabitants and it is envisaged that in the period 1981-1985 this figure will change to one doctor for every 440 inhabitants and one dental surgeon for every 1,900 inhabitants compared with the present 2,600.

Production of medical drugs has risen from the value of 108 million pesos in 1975 to

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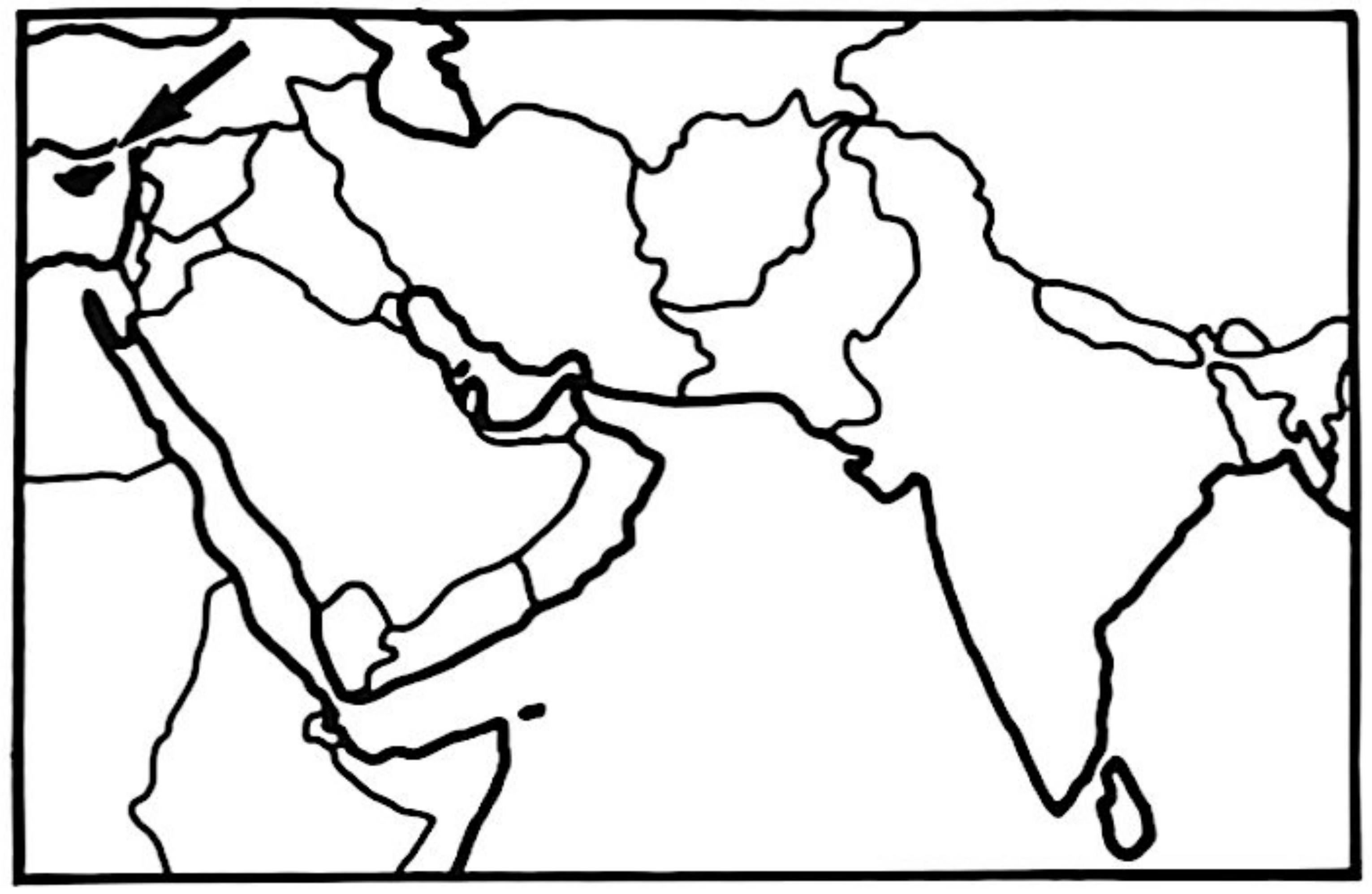

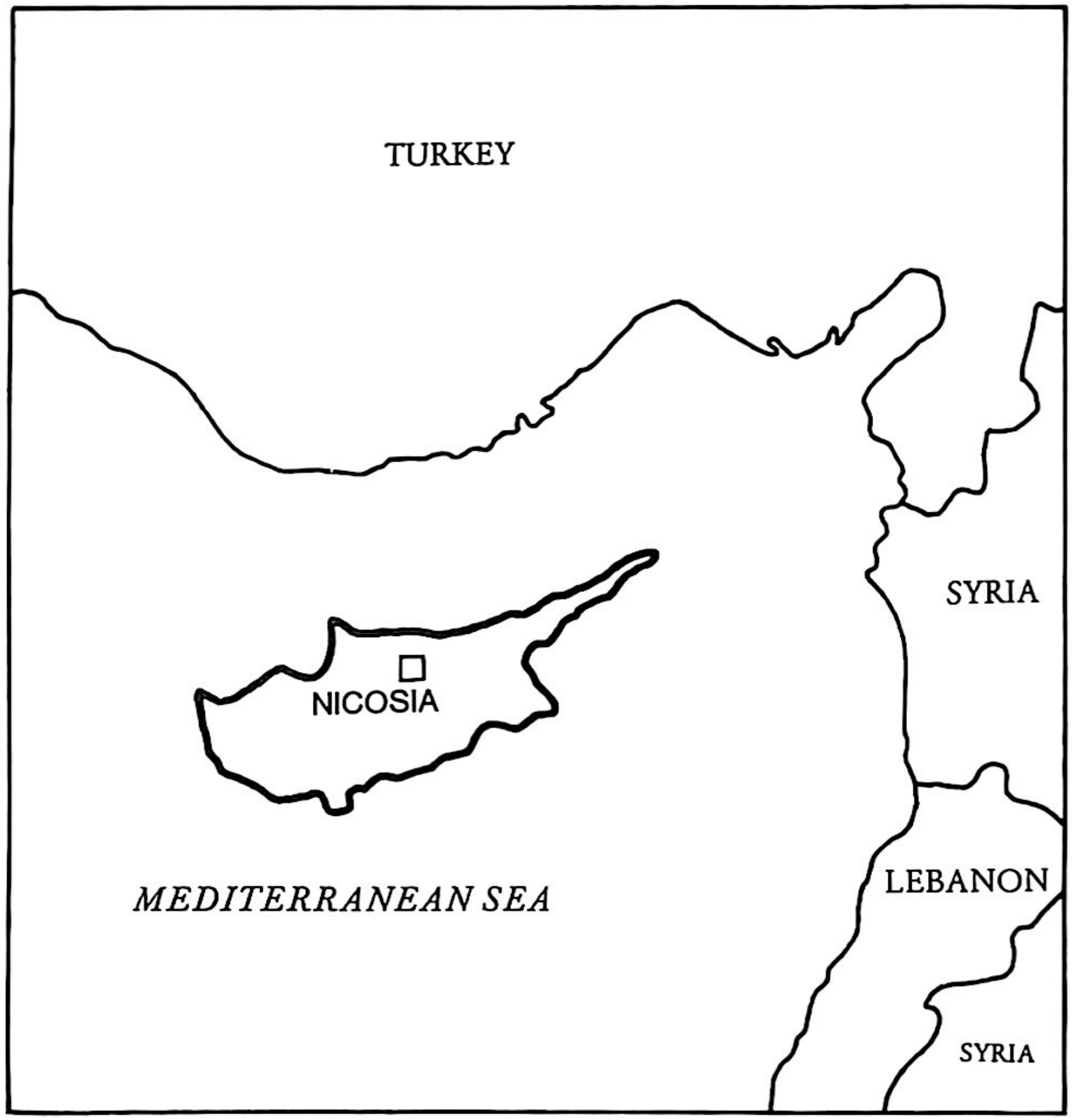
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137.8 million in 1980, and covers 81% of the national consumption.

Public health expenditure amounted to 445 million pesos in 1980, which was 22 times higher than the annual expenditure for this purpose prior to the revolution.

More than 2,500 Cuban medical and public health personnel provide assistance to 27 countries.

There are more than sixty scientific institutes in Cuba with a staff of 10,000, of whom some 2,000 are university graduates and a large number of those have done post-graduate study abroad and at home. Another method of advancement are annual competitions for the best scientific work submitted in the specified period.

Complex cardiovascular operations are being successfully carried out in Cuba, just as kidney transplants, electronic microscopy and intensive-care therapy in serious cases. For example, more than 400 kidney transplants have been performed with a survival ratio which compares well with that achieved in highly advanced countries. Highly specialized and quick treatment of cases of myocardial infarction is being provided, as well as of other serious cardiac diseases with good results. Comprehensive plans for treating diabetics and patients suffering from other complex ailments are being devised and implemented mostly by teams of specialists.

Another notable advance is the meticulous and profound study of natural substances as possible treatment of patients suffering from malignant tumors. These studies were launched in 1968 in the Experimental Phytochemistry and Chemotherapy Laboratory of the Institute of Oncology and Radiobiology. There, a team of botanists, biologists, toxicologists, chemists, mathematicians, laboratory technicians and engineers is studying leaves, stems, blossoms, seeds and fruit of the prolific Cuban flora which includes some 6,000 species. In May 1977, the Cuban Pharmacological Journal reported that satisfactory results had been obtained from twelve of the analyzed plants and from experiments carried out on various species of animals.

Tourism: The bed capacity for tourists has grown by 4,300 in apartments, 2,800 in new hotels, and 1,500 in villas and special areas.

21 new hotels have been opened and Cuba has been visited by some 340 thousand foreign tourists, not including Cubans residing abroad.

In 1980, more than 100 thousand tourists visited Cuba, which is 2.6 times more than in 1975. In addition, some 10 thousand Cubans travelled to the socialist countries.

In the period 1976-1980, there were 7 million domestic tourists and new forms of tourism have begun to be developed, such as camping, organized tours and excursions. This activity is being directed in Cuba by the National Institute of the Tourist Industry (INIT).

Religion: The Constitution of the Republic of Cuba recognizes and guarantees freedom of conscience and the right of every individual to profess any religious belief, or none, as well as to practise the creed of his preference with due respect for the law.

The Cuban state, which proceeds in its activities and in the education of the people from a scientific and materialist view of the universe, regulates by law the activities of religious institutions.

It is illegal and punishable to place religious creed or faith in opposition to the revolution, to education and to the duty to work, defend the country with arms, revering its symbols, or to other duties established by the constitution.

The policy of the PCC and the government with respect to religion is based on the dissemination of scientific knowledge and of the Marxist-Leninist concept of the world, on the right to profess or not a religious creed, to practise a religious cult with due respect for the law, and on the inadmissibility to use any religion for fighting the revolution and

socialism. It recognizes the equal rights and duties of believers and non-believers. It does not wage anti-religious campaigns, nor does it employ coersive or administrative measures against religion.

On the international level, especially as regards Latin America, the PCC and the Government of Cuba appreciate the activities of the many progressive and reform-minded Christian groups which take an active part in the struggle for national liberation.

Official name: Republic of Cyprus.
Area: 9,251 sq.km.
Borders: Cyprus is an island situated in the extreme northeast of the Mediterranean Sea close to the coasts of Turkey and Syria. It is the third largest island in the Mediterranean.
Population: According to unofficial estimates, Cyprus had a population of roughly 620,000 in 1979. The 1980 rate of population growth was 0.8%. More than 78% of the population are of Greek origin, 17.5% are of Turkish descent, and the rest is made up of people of different ethnic origins.
Capital: Nicosia 175,000 inhabitants.
Principle cities: Limassol, Larnaca, Famagusta, Paphos.
Languages: Greek and Turkish.
Public holidays: August 16, Independence Day.
Geography: Cyprus is an island of extended shape protruding to the east with its long and narrow Karpasso Peninsula which ends in Cape Andreas. Its maximum length is 240 km and maximum width 95 km. The limestone Kyrenia range in the northwestern part of the island rises at Mt. Akromandra to its maximum elevation of 1,019 m. In the northeast are the Carpas Mountains. The Troodos Mountains in the southwest are the island's highest; their highest peak, Mt. Olympos, reaches 1,953 m above sea level. In the centre of the island is the Messaoria or Lefkosia plain which is the country's most fertile region. In its northern part is situated the capital Nicosia. The most important rivers are the Pedias and the Talias (72 km) which are dry in the summer but which turn into raging torrents during the winter season.

At present, only 18% of the island's surface, which in earlier times had luxuriant vegetation, is wooded, due to indiscriminate felling of trees over many years. The climate is variable with scant rainfall. The summers are hot and dry but in the winter the temperature is moderate and there is fairly frequent rainfall. At that time, snow covers the mountains for a few weeks.

Brief history: The island of Cyprus lay in the area of expansion of the megalithic culture, on the path of successive invasions of the European continent. For thirty centuries a number of civilizations swept the island. The Hittites were among the first who established themselves on the territory which they turned into a part of their realm in Asia Minor. In the 14th century B.C. they maintained links with the Egyptians. The first true cities were not established, however, until around 1000 B.C. by the Phoenicians. Later, the Greeks conquered the island where they formed nine kingdoms. One century later the Assyrians arrived and turned the Phoenician and Greek rulers into their vassals. In the first half of the 6th century B.C., the Persians conquered Cyprus only to be replaced by the Egyptians and then the Persians again. In the 5th century B.C., the legions of Alexander the Great invaded Cyprus which passed once again into Egyptian hands on the death of the great general.

The Romans, in 58 B.C. turned the island into their province ruled by a Consul, and when the Roman Empire was divided, Cyprus came under Byzantine influence. It was the period of Greek domination, which left an indelible imprint on the island's culture. In the 7th century, it was conquered by the Arabs.

In 1191, the Crusade commander Richard the Lion-Heart, conquered the Mediterranean island for the English and subsequently sold it to another Crusade leader, Guido de Lusianan, whose heirs ruled it for three centuries until the Genoans expelled them only to lose their conquest to the Venetians. The Turks invaded Cyprus once again in 1571 and stayed there until 1878. However, Britain needed a base for her colonial expansion towards the Middle East, and in 1878, under an agreement with the Ottoman Empire, occupied the island in exchange for a pledge to defend it against Tsarist Russia. The British legalized their occupation of Cyprus in the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, and two years later turned the island into their colony.

From 1931 on rebellions began with Enosis—i.e. the island's merger with Greece—as the objective. The British authorities suppressed the movement and banished the leaders of the Greek Orthodox Church, who played an important role in the popular protest. During World War II, the Cypriots fought against fascism, but in 1946 the call for Enosis rose again. Two years later, Archbishop Makarios III was appointed head of the Greek Orthodox Church in Cyprus; he was the country's supreme political and religious leader. In 1950, a referendum was held, in which 75% of the adult population took part, and 95.7% of them voted for merger with Greece and for self-determination. However, the British refused to accept the results of the plebiscite and also rejected a second one. On April 1, 1955, an armed insurgency broke out, headed by the nationalist organization EOKA, which was led by General George Grivas, a member of the rightist faction of the Greek Army. The British troops suffered serious losses and imposed the death penalty on the insurgents or sent them to concentration camps. AKEL, the Cypriot Communist organization, also fought heroically against the foreign occupation. The British then encouraged the activities of a group known as "Volcano", which was made up of Turks and their descendants. In March 1956, they banished Archbishop Makarios but failed to intimidate the Cypriot people.

Faced by the growth of the nationalist movement, the Foreign Ministers of the United Kingdom, Greece and Turkey met in Switzerland in January 1959 to discuss the independence of Cyprus and to institute a government representative of the two main ethnic communities, which would have a Greek President and a Turkish Vice-President, and where the public offices would be proportionately divided (60% would be held by Greeks and 40% by Turks). In addition, the signatories reserved for themselves the right to intervene individually whenever they deemed it necessary. The respective agreements were signed in London on February 19, 1959, were ratified soon thereafter, and a Constitution was approved for Cyprus. A new, independent republic was then proclaimed in Nicosia on August 16, 1960, with Archbishop Makarios as its President. He was re-elected by an overwhelming majority in February 1968. In the meantime, however, the imperialist and reactionary elements had inflamed the differences between the two ethnic communities inhabiting the island, and violent clashes erupted between Greek and Turkish Cypriots in 1963, 1964, 1967. The instigators of these events were the generals of the fascist junta in Greece, as well as the NATO powers which wanted to convert Cyprus into a military base. Moreover, a rightist organization calling itself the National Front committed numerous acts of terrorism. President Makarios and the progressive forces on their part proposed a just solution of the ethnic problem, which would place in harmony the economic, political and religious interests of the two communities without intervention from abroad and maintaining full national sovereignty of the island republic.

On July 15, 1974, a coup d'etat was staged against the Makarious government after bitter fighting in the capital and other places on the island. Heading the insurrection were Greek officers of the National Guard, who had been dismissed by Makarios because of activities against the country's interests. The threads of the conspiracy stretched as far as the Greek military junta and the United States intelligence services. Heading the mutiny was the notorious anti-Communist Nikos Sampson who relied on the help of the EOKA-B terrorists. Apart from many acts of vandalism, this fascist organization had already once tried to assassinate President Makarios. A week later, the Turks occupied the northern part of the island, bombed the capital, and expelled 200,000 Greek Cypriots from their homes. In December 1974, Archbishop Makarios returned to his office. In February 1975, a Turkish Cypriot state proclaimed itself in the northern part of the country, representing 40% of the country's total area. Rauf Denktash became its President and there was also an Assembly of 40 delegates, both elected by 99.4% of the population of the zone in the presence of more than 40,000 Turkish trops.

In August 1977, Archbishop Makarios died and was succeeded by President Spyros Kyprianou who proclaimed his adherence to the line pursued by the late Archbishop, i.e. continued struggle for the re-unification of the country which has been divided into two parts separated by a "Green Line" guarded by United Nations forces since 1974.

In April of that year, as a result of the planned and systematic expulsion of members of the Greek-Cypriot community living in the north of the island, occupied by the Turkish troops, only 2,000 members of that community remained in that zone, compared with more than 200,000 before the invasion.

Since the outbreak of the conflict, the United Nations has promoted the idea of talks between the two communities, aimed at settling the serious differences between them by peaceful means. The first three rounds of these talks, sponsored by the world organization, took place in Vienna between April and August 1975. Until 1978, a total of six rounds of negotiations had been held without any progress, except for a few agreements of a humanitarian nature.

At its 29th session, the U.N. General Assembly called for respect for the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus, respect for its non-alignment, withdrawal of all military forces from the country and an end to foreign interference, as well as for a solution of the refugee problem. The same sentiments have been expressed on different occasions by various meetings of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

After many attempts to resume the negotiations between the two Cypriot communities, which thus far have been deadlocked because of the refusal of the Turkish Cypriots to accept the principles of an agreement, set by the United Nations, the talks got a new impulse in May 1979, when the leaders of the two communities, Rauf Denktash and President Kyprianou, approved a resumption of the paralyzed discussions.

At that time, observers of the situation in Cyprus felt that besides the differences between the two communities, it was evident that the island was being used as a pawn in the game played in the region by NATO, in particular where it involved the relations of Greece and Turkey with the Atlantic Alliance and the United States.

The last round of the talks between the two Cypriot communities still showed little indication of progress. The two basic concepts of the island's future continue to appear incompatible. On the one hand, the legitimate government established in the Greek-Cypriot area calls for preservation of the country's unity and for the freedom of the whole population to choose its place of residence. It considers essential the formation of a federal government with real powers in matters of foreign policy, national defence, finance, etc. A basic demand is the resettlement in their original places of residence of the 200,000 refugees at present living in the southern part of the country, and the withdrawal of foreign troops.

On the other hand, under the concept of the so-called Federated Turkish State of Cyprus, constituted in the northern zone, it would remain separated from the Greek-Cypriot part in all fundamental matters and the competence of the federal government would be reduced to a few non-essential areas.

A new round of negotiations was opened in September 1980 under the same circumstances. On that occasion, the differences of opinion centred on the interpretation of the terms "federal" and "bi-zonal", contained in earlier agreements and understood differently by each party. The prospects of an early solution of the Cypriot crisis thus continue to be considered distant.

Internally, the first local elections in more than fifty years were held in the Greek-Cypriot sector in 1979, for these tradional elections had been suspended by the British colonial authorities since the beginning of the 1930s. The ballot produced an overwhelming majority for the progressive groupings. In 1980, serious differences emerged within the ruling party which saw its members in Parliament reduced in numbers to a mere 17 of the total 35 seats. Different political forces are calling for parliamentary elections which would re-define the position of the individual political parties in the Cypriot parliament.

Economy: The Turkish invasion in 1974 had a most negative impact on the economic development of Cyprus. The de facto partition of the island has produced two parallel economies—one in the Turkish-Cypriot zone, the other in the Greek-Cypriot area.

Before the events of 1974 it was estimated that the Greek Cypriots accounted for approximately 90% of the gross national product which then exceeded 250 million Cypriot pounds. Today it seems that the northern part of the island, held by Cypriot Turks, is facing serious labour problems, while in the south economic progress is being made in spite of the difficulties posed by the presence of some 200,000 refugees in that part of the country.

In recent years, the agricultural sector has been replaced by commerce and industrial production as the mainstay of the Cypriot economy. Prior to the Turkish invasion, some 50 to 60% of the island's total area were cultivated and agriculture, together with fishing, provided employment to 40% of the economically active population and accounted for approximately 20% of the domestic production. According to government figures, 36% of the island's total area and approximately 60% of its agricultural and industrial potential are in Turkish hands.

Until the invasion, the main crops were citrus fruit, cereals, potatoes, carrots, grapes, and olives. Exports of citrus fruit dropped from the average of 200,000 metric tons in the years preceding the partition of the island to 69,000 tons in the period 1977 to 1978. In the Turkish sector, which includes the main citrus-growing areas, the export of this fruit amounts to 100,000 tons a year. A plan of agricultural development in that part of the island for the period 1979-1982 calls for total investments of 1,352 million Turkish pounds.

The fishing industry has begun to recuperate from the blows it suffered during the civil strife. In 1975, the Cypriot government initiated a plan of investments in that sector of the national economy, amounting to 200,000 Cypriot pounds.

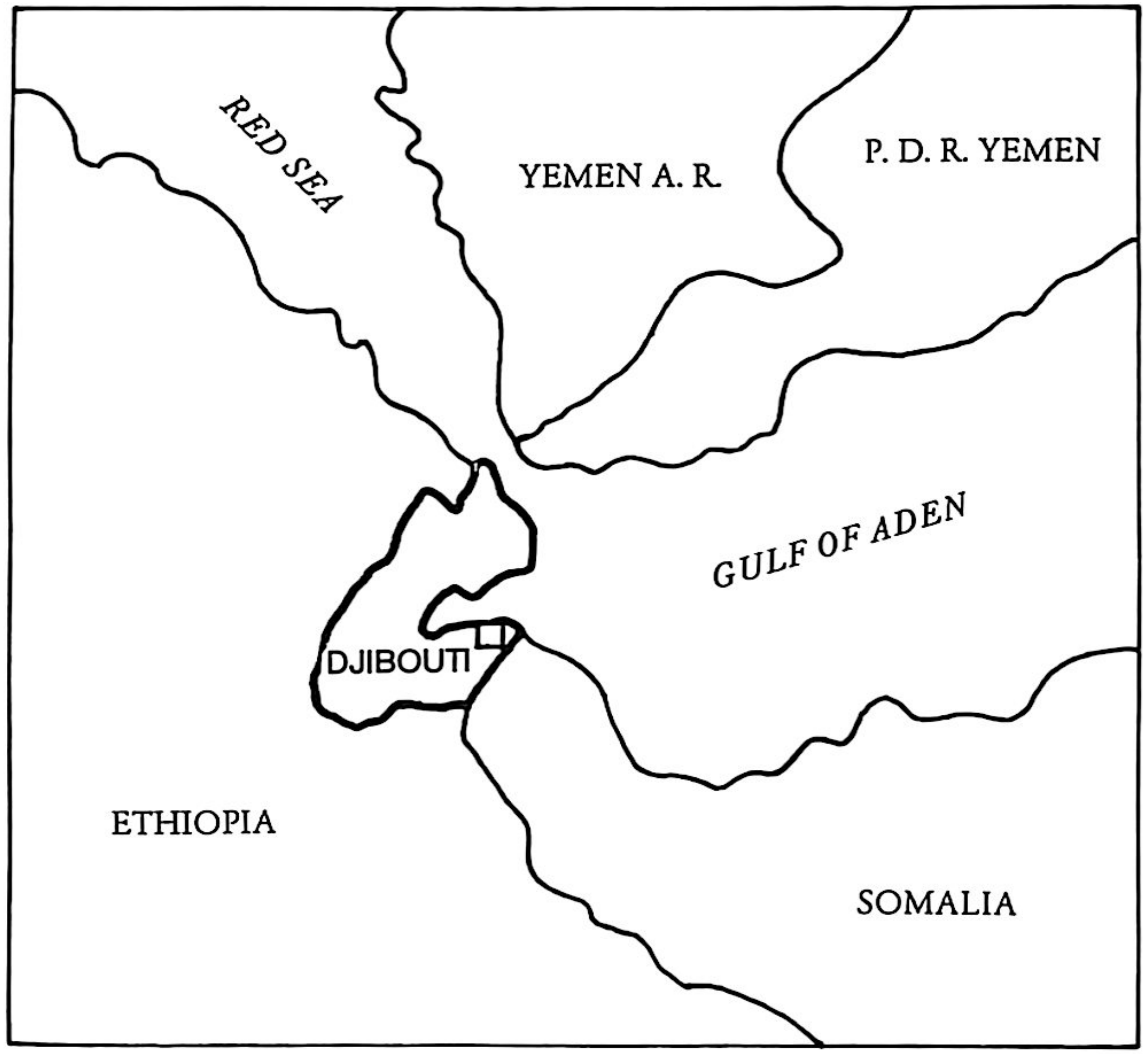
Before July 1974, the industrial sector accounted for 27% of the gross national product, concentrating on food production, textiles and clothing. The only heavy industries in Cyprus are those of petroleum refining, electricity production, and cement production. It is estimated that one quarter of the island's industrial capacity is in the Turkish zone where exports rose from 13 million Turkish pounds in 1976 to more than 50 million in 1978.

In the Greek-Cypriot part of the island, free zones were established in Nicosia, Limassol and Larnaca in the effort to stimulate economic development.

In the mining sector, there has been a marked reduction in the existing reserves and thus it adds only 8% to the total exports of Cyprus according to 1977 figures. A number of mines in the Turkish-Cypriot zone are not being exploited. The island's mineral resources include copper, pyrites, gypsum, chromium, and asbestos.

The tourist industry was one of the most deeply affected economic sectors after the events of 1974. However, in spite of the fact that most of the tourist attractions are located in the northern part of the island, 216,679 tourists are reported to have visited the Greek-

DJIBOUTI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Cypriot part in 1978, while in the north there were some 113,000, who came mainly from Turkey.

In 1979, the government announced the launching of a third plan of urgent economic action, designed mainly to encourage industrial development. The budget for the development of the southern zone was 35.7 million Cypriot pounds in 1979, of which 8.5 million were allocated for the resettlement of refugees and construction of housing facilities for them.

In the Turkish sector, the launching of a five-year development plan was announced in the same year, under which 40% of the total sum of 350 million U.S. dollars would be spent on agricultural development.

A report for 1978, published in the southern zone, noted that unemployment there had reached its lowest level since 1974, with only 3,476 registered unemployed workers. However, it should be remembered that a considerable part of the skilled labour force has emigrated in recent years.

According to figures available for 1978, the country's balance of payments increased its negative trend. Total exports amounted to approximately 128,370,000 Cypriot pounds i.e. slightly less than the year before. Official statistics reported a deficit of 133.6 million due to imports which had risen 12% compared with 1977.

The main suppliers were Great Britain, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States and Greece, while the exports went chiefly to Great Britain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Kuwait. In 1978, the Arab market accounted for 47% of Cypriot exports.

Foreign-exchange reserves were estimated at 364 million dollars in February 1979. There are no figures available on per capita gross national product or income. The official currency is the Cypriot pound which until 1972 had maintained its parity with the pound sterling and which in 1980 had the rate of exchange of 0.35 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Cyprus is a republic with a presidential system. The Constitution of 1960 divided political power between a Greek-Cypriot President and a Turkish-Cypriot Vice-President. Greece and Turkey are to act as guarantors of the country's national independence, but Great Britain maintains her sovereignty over the territory of her military bases on the island. Legislative power is vested in a House of Representatives which has 50 members (35 Greek-Cypriots and 15 Turkish-Cypriots). Communal Chambers also exist for each of the two principle ethnic groups; their function is to deal with social matters and education. The Executive has the right to veto decisions regarding foreign policy, defence and internal security, and it can also return any legislation to parliament for reconsideration.

At present, the self-proclaimed Turkish-Cypriot state exists in the north of the country, but it has not succeeded in obtaining recognition from the international community which is opposed to the partition of the island.

In the Greek-Cypriot zone there is a parliament which has 35 members, all Greek-Cypriots.

Armed forces: The Military Service Law stipulates that men up to the age of fifty shall be permanent reserve members of the National Guard. At the end of 1977, the police force had 2,871 members.

In the northern zone, more than 40,000 Turkish troops are stationed, while the four British bases located on the island have some 4,000 men.

Organizations: There is a wide spectrum of political parties in the country. The principle ones include the Democratic Party of President Spyros Kyprianou, the Progressive Working People's Party (AKEL), which is Marxist-Leninist in its orientation and which has the allegiance of 35% of the electorate, and the Socialist Party of Cyprus (EDEK). In 1980, the New Democratic Front was formed by a splinter group of the ruling Democratic Party. The Democratic Union, which is rightist in its character, suffered a serious reverse in the last rural elections. In the Turkish-Cypriot sector the main political organization is the National Party.

The Cypriot Federation of Labour is the main workers' organization in the country. In the Turkish sector the Revolutionary Trade Union Federation operates.

There are several student and youth organizations in Cyprus, such as the Organization of the United Democratic Youth of Cyprus (EDON). the Federation of Students (POFNE), the Socialist Youth (EDEN), the Democratic Party Youth,and the Trade Union Working Youth.

There is also a Federation of Democratic Women of Cyprus.

Education: Primary education is free and obligatory, and although secondary education is not obligatory, it is free for the first three years. Vocational education is also free. In 1978, there were in the Greek-Cypriot sector 433 primary schools with 55,166 pupils, 74 secondary schools with 42,645 students, and 10 vocational schools with 6,723 students. In the Turkish-Cypriot sector there were 177 primary schools with 18,220 pupils, and 22 secondary schools with 10,504 students.

There is no university in Cyprus, but in 1976, some 11,770 young Cypriots attended institutions of higher learning abroad.

Public health: At the end of 1977, there was one hospital bed for every 170 inhabitants, the number of doctors was 478, one for every 1,092 inhabitants. The infant mortality rate was 27.2 per thousand live born babies, while among women the death rate during child-birth was 0.2 per thousand. In the Greek-Cypriot sector, the 1977 public health budget was 5,750,000 Cypriot pounds, while in the northern zone—in 1978—the public health budget was 11,630,000 Turkish pounds.

Religion: Greek Orthodox believers predominate (79% of the population), followed by Moslems (18%), Roman Catholics, Armenians, Maronites, and Protestants.

Official name: Republic of Djibouti.
Area: 21,783 sq.km.
Borders: In the north, west and southwest, Djibouti borders on Ethiopia, in the southeast on Somalia, and in the east on the Gulf of Aden.
Population: 250,000 inhabitants, according to estimates. The 1980 rate of population growth was 2.2%. There are two main ethnic groups living in the country—the Affars and the Issas—and there is also a small Arab minority.
Capital: Djibouti (160,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Ali Sabieh, Tadjurah, Dikel, and Oboc.
Languages: French and Arabic are the official languages. Somali and Affar are also spoken.
Public holidays: June 27, Independence Day (1977).
Geography: Most of Djibouti's territory is a low volcanic plateau, bordered at some places by depressions and lakes, some of which, such as Assal and Alol, are below sea-level.

Most streams run underground and empty into the coastal waters or into lakes. There is practically no important river on the surface.

The climate is very hot most of the year and the average temperature is 30° C. A relatively cold season occurs between November and April. Humidity is high in the coastal area, but gradually decreases towards the interior of the country. Rainfall is scarce and irregular, averaging 38 mm on the coast and 45 mm in the hills.

Except for the wooded regions of Mabla and Gouda, vegetation is limited to thickets and low shrub.

Brief history: As in the case of the other peoples living in the Horn of Africa, the ancient history of Djibouti is linked with the history of the Egypt of the Pharaohs, especially from the period of the Second Dynasty, when the Egyptians began to penetrate the territory which was then relatively unpopulated and inhabited only by small, scattered tribes.

The Middle Ages was the era of the glory of the Moslem domination of the Eastern coast of Africa. Between the 7th and 9th centuries Moslem merchants established settlements on the periphery of the Ethiopian realm and busily traded with that Christian empire.

Islam forged a link between the dispersed population of the area, who rapidly embraced it. In the 11th century, several sultanates were established between the port of Zeila and the Ethiopian state. These sultanates lived off commerce, trading with such goods as marble and gold, in addition to the slave trade. At a later date, the Ethiopian Empire subdued them and turned them into vassal states.

Europeans arrived on the Red Sea coast in the 19th century, attracted by the riches of Ethiopia, and established themselves without much trouble in the Moslem-dominated territories with the intention of trading with the Ethiopians.

However, when work began on digging the Suez Canal, which was completed in 1869, the area became one of great strategic importance as a vital commercial route. In 1862, the French seized Obock in order to counter-balance the British presence in Aden. Shortly thereafter, they shifted the centre of their presence in the area to Djibouti as a good port and a convenient place for developing trade with Ethiopia.

This trade was greatly stimulated in 1894, when construction began of the first railway line linking Djibouti with Addis Ababa. Its construction was completed in 1917.

In view of the importance her territorial possession had acquired, France decided in 1896 to give it a colonial status under the name the French Somali Coast and Dependencies. The railway construction was parallelled by the construction of the port of Djibouti, whose traffic spurred the expansion of the city proper.

The first decades of the 20th century were characterized by the French penetration and colonization of the interior of the enclave. Its full occupation was completed in 1924.

The two decades between the completion of this occupation and the end of World War II were uneventful. What changed the course of events was the emergence of nationalist consciousness which developed throughout Africa in the port-war period as a result of the war.

Confronted with the first signs of African nationalism in Djibouti, France conceded some reforms in her colony in order to neutralize this process. In 1947, in accordance with the provisions of the French Constitution of 1946, French Somaliland was given a new status—that of an "Overseas Territory". Also established were systems of representative councils which permitted the native inhabitants to take some part in the government. However, this system caused greater friction between the two main ethnic groups—the Affar and the Issa—whose rivalry was exploited by the French to break up the nationalist movement.

The growth of African nationalism eventually forced the French to grant additional reforms towards autonomy. Thus, the *Loi-cadre* (Framework Law), enacted in 1956, provided for the gradual granting of autonomy to the overseas territories and for the formation of the bodies necessary for this process. In Djibouti, as in the other overseas territories, a Council of Government and a Territorial Assembly were created, whose members were natives of the territory.

In spite of these moves, the French retained their control of the territory and of the key ministries.

For its part, the nationalist movement succeeded in forging a unity with distinctive trends, and to form political parties. In 1957, two parties were established—the Party for the Defence of the Territory's Economic and Social Interests (DIEST) and the Republican Union (UR).

The DIEST was founded by Hassan Gouled, Senator for French Somaliland in the French National Assembly, with the objective of entering the territorial elections scheduled for 1957 and won by the Republican Union.

The Republican Union, led by Mohamed Harbi, won a crushing victory in those elections and Harbi was designated Prime Minister and Vice-President of the Territorial Assembly, as well as Deputy in the French National Assembly.

In 1958, following the insurrection of the French military and "colons" in Algeria, which threw the Fourth Republic into crisis, General de Gaulle made a tour of the territories of the French Union with the proposal that they associate themselves with France in a Community. This proposed French Community would be headed by de Gaulle as President of all the territories and of France proper, and there would also be an Executive Council, a Council of Ministers, a Senate, and a Court of Arbitration.

Each territory of the Union could opt to remain within it as a colony, or to constitute itself as an autonomous state. Some time later, de Gaulle announced a third option—independence.

The Republican Union under Harbi's leadership waged a campaign for independence, while the DIEST, led by Gouled and encouraged by the French, called for retention of the colonial status. Its policy prevailed and French Somaliland became the only territory of the Union to do so. The other territories constituted themselves as autonomous republics, except for Guinea which chose independence.

After its victory in the referendum, the DIEST formed a government with Hassan Gouled at its head. Harbi launched a campaign against the colonial status and in favour of unity with Somalia. The Territorial Assembly, under Harbi's pressure, passed a vote of no confidence in the Gouled government, which move provoked its dissolution by the Governor.

Public demonstrations against the dissolution of the Assembly, called and led by the Republican Union, produced a tense situation which ended with the disbanding of the Republican Union and the imprisonment of its leadership. Harbi moved to Cairo where he died in an air crash in 1960.

In 1964, the member-states of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries met in the Egyptian capital and among other decisions also passed a resolution demanding that France should grant independence to French Somaliland.

In 1965, Somalia made clear its territorial claims to French Somaliland. In the same year the Somali government petitioned the United Nations to put pressure on France to grant independence to her colony.

In 1966, Charles de Gaulle made his last visit to French Somaliland where he was received by its Prime Minister, Berhan Ali Aref, who had held that post since 1960. During the visit, street demonstrations occurred, in which many civilians calling for independence were killed.

Also in 1966, Ali Aref was replaced as Prime Minister by Mohamed Kamil. In yet another development, France and Ethiopia signed an agreement on the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway.

In 1967, France proposed a referendum on granting the territory a new status, hoping to silence the demands for independence, raised by the Affars. In the referendum—according to official figures—60.6% of the voters preferred to remain under French administration. As a result of the referendum, the country was renamed the French Territory of the Affars and Issas.

New government bodies were set up under the new status—a Chamber of Deputies, whose members were elected by popular vote under universal suffrage for a term of five years, and a Council of Ministers, elected by the Chamber which could also end its mandate by a motion of censure. However, both bodies actually had only administrative duties because the French Governor still held the supreme authority.

During this process, demonstrations and street incidents took place, organized by the advocates of independence. These protests resulted in the imprisonment of their leader, Mahumud Sikiad Dirieh, and the death of twelve demonstrators.

In the 1970s, two liberation movements against French domination, which had been founded some years earlier, gained in importance—the Front for the Liberation of the Somali Coast (FLCS) and the Movement for the Liberation of Djibouti (MLD).

In May 1973, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) denounced the French colonial presence in Djibouti at its regular session in Cairo, and proclaimed the country's right to independence.

In 1973, French President Georges Pompidou made a visit to Djibouti to seek support for the continued French presence in that country.

However, shortly thereafter it became obvious that holding onto the last French colonial possession in Africa was becoming counter-productive for French interests. The victory of the revolution in Ethiopia in 1974 produced a more favourable climate in the Horn of Africa for demanding the independence of Djibouti, which was being advocated by different political groups of both major ethnic communities in the country. On the other hand, the position taken by the OAU left no place for doubt on the part of the French government that it should grant formal independence to the territory.

In 1975, the French government announced its approval of the request for the independence of Djibouti.

In 1976, a preliminary agreement was signed on the independence of the country. Shortly thereafter, new incidents broke out in the capital of the territory, resulting in the death of 15 people, while sixty people were wounded.

Premier Ali Aref, who was of Affar ethnic origin and who had gained notoriety by his collaboration with the French, resigned, and Mohammed Kamil once again occupied the premiership.

On May 8, 1977, a referendum was held to determine whether the people wanted independence or whether they preferred to preserve their colonial status. 98% of the electorate voted for independence.

Taking part in the referendum was the African People's League for Independence, headed by Hassan Gouled, who joined forces for the voting with the Front for the Liberation of the Somali Coast.

For their part, the National Independence Union and the Djibouti Liberation Movement refused to take part in the referendum, but instructed their supporters to vote for independence. The independent Republic was proclaimed on June 27, 1977.

The first parliament, which had 65 seats, reflected in its composition the different political trends in the country. The African People's League won the majority with twenty seats. Next came a heterogeneous group of sixteen old members of parliament from the colonial era, most of them dedicated advocates of independence, five seats were taken by the FLCS which in its latest statements favoured union with Somalia, the UNI got two parliamentary seats, and the remaining seats were divided between the MLD, representatives of the Arab (Yemeni) minority, and independents.

The new government was formed by Hassan Gouled as President of the Republic and Ahmed Dini as Prime Minister, the former of Issa and the latter of Affar ethnic origin.

Following its independence, the new Republic joined the United Nations Organization, the Organization of African Unity, and the Arab League.

An agreement signed immediately after the proclamation of independence secured the continuity of French presence on the territory of the new state. The size of the French military contingent was reduced from some 11,000 men in the period of the maximum deployment of troops and military personnel in the important base dominating the Bab el Mandeb Strait, to approximately 4,500 stationed there permanently with the most modern weapons and military equipment.

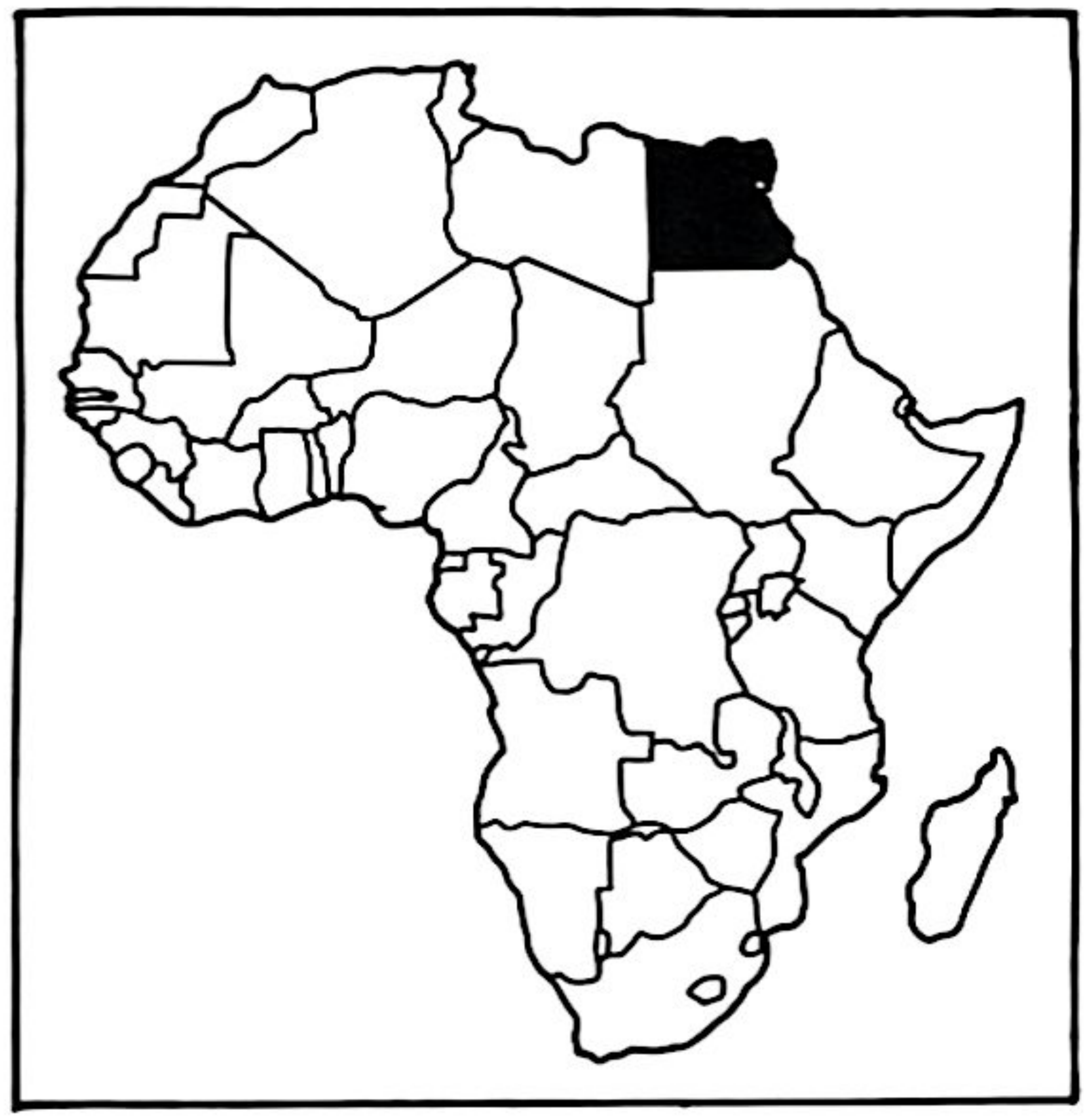
The 115 years of colonial rule left a deep imprint on Djibouti. The economy is completely dependent on services since there is no industry. When the French flag was lowered in Djibouti, the country had only three professionals of native origin—two doctors and an engineer.

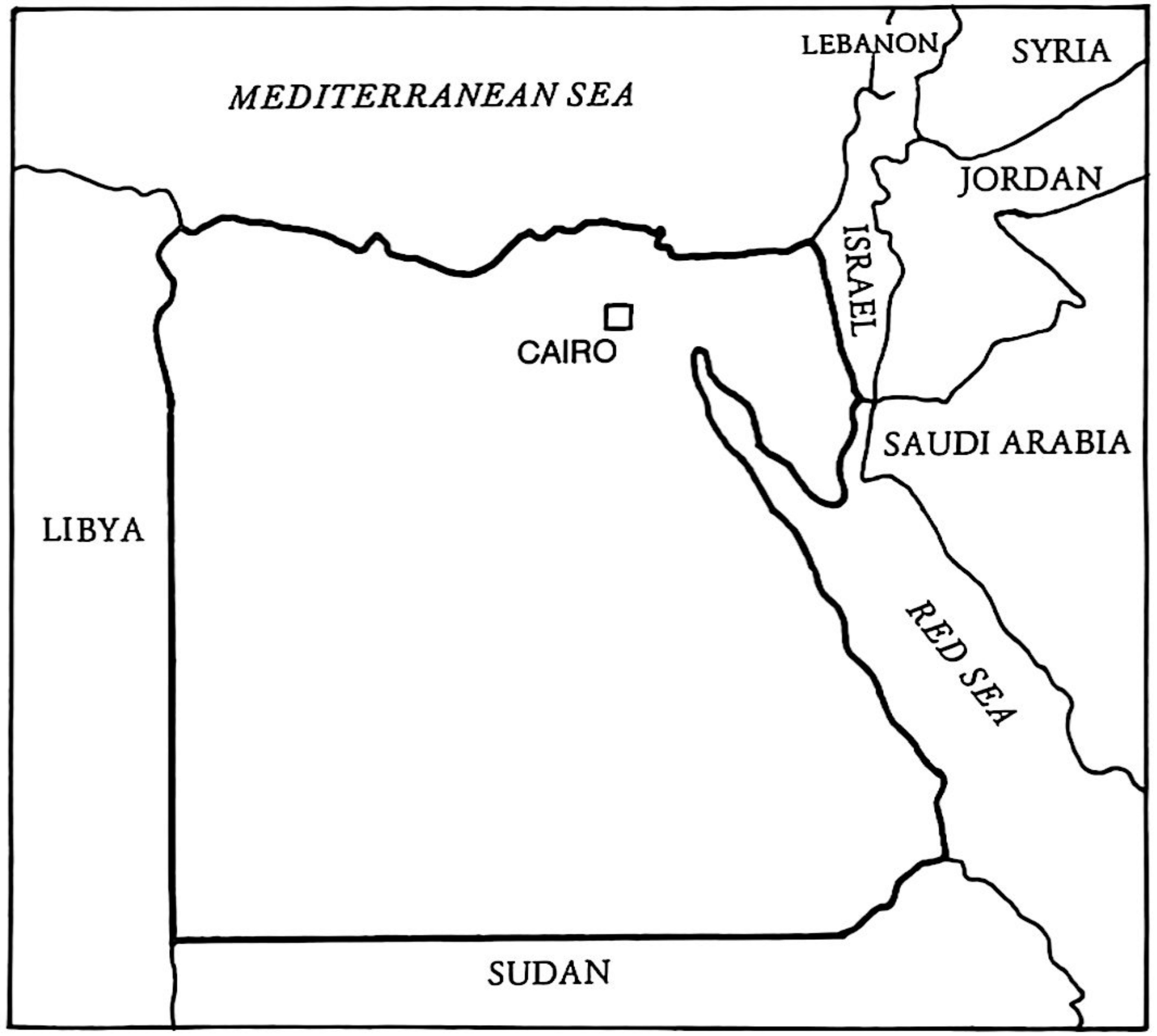
In the course of its short period of independence, Djibouti has had to face problems arising from the rivalry existing between its two principal ethnic groups. Prime Minister Ahmed Dini resigned in December 1977 and condemned the "tribalism" of the authorities who had severely persecuted members of the Affar group following certain incidents, the gravest of which was an attack on the restaurant "Palmier au zinc" in the centre of the capital, in which six Frenchmen died.

President Gouled proposed the formation of a commission which would examine the complaints of the Affar community at the beginning of 1978, and succeeded in forming a new government headed by an Affar Premier, Abdullah Mohammed Kamil. The government was set up in February of that year.

Gouled has endeavoured to maintain close cooperation with France, at the same time trying to obtain financial support from different Arab countries for various development projects. Relations have been strengthened with Ethiopia on which depends most of Djibouti's economic activity due to the railway line linking the capital with Addis Ababa. Ethiopia has also firmly defended the independence of Djibouti against Somalia's annex-

EGYPT

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ationist plans. The relations consolidated especially after the 1977-1978 war in the area.

New cooperation agreements were signed in 1978 with France which raised her financial aid to Djibouti to 275 million francs in 1979. In 1980, 482 French "collaborators" provided their services to Djibouti in addition to the French troops stationed on its territory.

In September 1980, the French government approved two protocols stipulating the conditions for the stationing of French troops in Djibouti and providing for military cooperation between the two countries, which had been discussed during President Gouled's two visits in Paris in that year.

At the end of 1980, the premiership was assumed by Barkad Gourad Hamadou, an Affar politician from Dikil.

Economy: Djibouti is a very poor country which lacks natural resources that would sustain its economy. A shortage of water and the arid character of the land do not permit much agricultural activity and what there is, cannot satisfy domestic needs.

A large part of Djibouti's population are nomads, a fact which greatly affects the economic development of the country. 20% of its income is derived from nomadic livestock raising. However, in order to subsist, Djibouti must import large quantities of products, including food.

During the colonial period Djibouti's economic activity was dependent to a large measure on the French presence since France infused some 140 million dollars of subsidies into the country, even though most of that sum returned to the metropolitan country in one form or another.

Djibouti has suffered from chronic unemployment. In 1975, barely 13,000 of some 65,000 persons on the labour market, had jobs. The number of job-seekers was estimated at more than 100,000 in 1980.

The country's impoverished economy is sustained by two basic activities--the port facilities and the railway line between Djibouti and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

In 1977, the two accounted for 80% of Djibouti's gross national product, while its pastoral activities contributed the remaining 20%.

Located on the petroleum route, the port of Djibouti shares primacy in port activities in the region with Aden and Jeddah.

The Djibouti port earned 36.1 million Djibouti francs in 1979, and 157.3 million Djibouti francs the next year, due mainly to a rise in operating costs. The number of vessels serviced there in those two years was 1,267 and 1,182 respectively, which level corresponds to that of 1975, when it accommodated 1,230 ships.

During the period of the Somali aggression against Ethiopia, which interrupted the operation of the Djibouti-Addis Ababa railway line, Djibouti's port activities were seriously affected and the country suffered great losses. The enlargement of the port facilities at Jeddah, in Saudi Arabia, also represents serious competition to Djibouti.

The government is striving to expand the existing port facilities (2,700 m of quays and 14 hectares of free zone) by building some 10,000 sq.m of covered storage space, loading and unloading facilities, and a refrigerating plant; it expects to receive financial aid from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait for this purpose.

On August 16, 1980, the government announced the approval of a project to establish an international free port which should considerably add to the existing port facilities and greatly raise job opportunities from the 2,000 offered by the present port.

The railway line is Djibouti's second source of income. Of its total length of 718 km up to the Ethiopian capital, 100 km are on Djibouti territory. Cargo traffic amounted to 382,000 tons in 1975. During the Somali-Ethiopian conflict, the railway traffic was paralized and was not re-opened until June 1978. It is estimated that this railway carries roughly one half of Ethiopia's commerce.

Until independence, Djibouti's sole industry was the production of carbonated beverages (6.5 million litres in 1976). At present, some investment plans are being put into effect, including the construction of a cement mill with Iraqi aid, valued at 60 million dollars, and a mineral water bottling plant at Tadjourah.

Agricultural production is minimal—dates and some vegetables. Livestock production is estimated to include 19,000 head of cattle, 99,000 sheep and 593,000 goats.

Exports include some agricultural products and hides, while the main import items are petroleum, food products, manufactured goods and motor vehicles. Djibouti's main suppliers are France and Ethiopia.

The 1980 national budget amounted to 12,000 million Djibouti francs, of which sum 940 million were earmarked for industrial investment.

The 1980 gross national product amounted to 140 million dollars and per capita income was 450 dollars.

The national currency is the Djibouti franc whose rate of exchange in 1979 was 177.72 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Djibouti has a presidential system of government. Executive power is vested in the President and a Council of Ministers. Legislative power is in the hands of a Chamber of Deputies, which has 65 members.

The supreme law of the country is a constitution enacted after independence in 1977. There are five electoral districts—Djibouti, Tadjourah, Obock, Dikil, and Ali Sabrieh.

Organizations: Four political organizations formed prior to independence dominate the political life of the country. The African People's League (LPAI), the present ruling party, was founded in 1975 under the presidency of Hassan Gouled. Allied in the election campaign with the League, the Front for the Liberation of the Somali Coast supported Gouled's candidacy.

In June 1979, two opposition organizations announced their merger—the National Independence Union and the Djibouti Liberation Movement (MLD), which united as the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Djibouti (FDLD). The Front opposes President Gouled's policy.

All members of parliament, no matter what their political allegiance may be, are elected under the banner of the RPI (Popular Rally for Independence), although there is actually no such political unity.

There are no trade union organizations.

Education: In the 1976-1977 school term 10,250 pupils attended primary schools and 2,045 students attended secondary and vocational schools. More than 60% of the population are illiterate.

Public health: There is one doctor for every 5,000 inhabitants and one hospital bed for every 235. Djibouti has two hospitals.

Religion: The majority of the population are Moslems, although in some places traditional African cults are being practised.

Official name: The Arab Republic of Egypt.
Area: 1,001,449 sq.km.
Borders: In the north is the Mediterranean Sea, in the northeast Israel, in the east the Red Sea, in the south Sudan, and in the west Libya.
Population: 42,000,000 inhabitants in 1980. The majority of the population are Arabs or Arabized people of other ethnic origin, following some thirteen centuries of Moslem rule. Approximately 60% of the population live in rural areas. The annual rate of population growth was 2.2% in the period 1970-1977.
Capital: Cairo.
Principal cities: Alexandria, Gaza, Aswan, Damiette, Ismailia, Suez, Port Said.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: July 23, Day of the Revolution (1952).
Geography: "Egypt is a gift of the Nile", said the Greek historian Herodotus, known as the Father of History, who lived in the 5th century B.C. What is certain is the fact that the great river and its wide delta were the cradle of one of the world's great civilizations and for thousands of years, successive organic strata were deposited by floods along the banks of this major waterway, which are extremely fertile and permit as many as three harvests a year. Of the Nile's total length of 6,540 km, 1,100 km are in Egypt.

The Mediterranean and the Red Sea form Egypt's coasts. Its Mediterranean coast is about 1,500 km long, stretching from the Gulf of Sallum to the Gaza area. The Red Sea coastline runs for about 1,800 km, including the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba, and between them the triangle of the Sinai Peninsula. In general, it is the Nile which largely determines the topography and the make-up of Egypt's terrain. It enters the country through Wadi Halfa and then runs through a narrow valley, enclosed by sandy hills, to Esna. It then meanders among clay hillocks until it reaches Cairo. From there, to the north, it spreads into the multiple branches of its delta which empty into the sea at Damietta and Rosetta. Seen from the air, the Nile valley and the delta form a strip of perennial greenery contrasting with the aridity of the surrounding desert areas which are split by the great river artery, the longest in the world. The two desert areas are the Western Desert, which extends to the Libyan frontier, and the Eastern Desert stretching as far as the Suez Canal, the Gulf of Suez, and the Red Sea. There is also the smaller Sinai Desert on the peninsula of the same name. The Western Desert is extremely dry and has no oases or sources of water. On the other hand, the Eastern Desert is furrowed with dry river beds—*wadis*—which fill with water during rainy preriods, and is bordered by steep mountains in the extreme east. The Sinai Desert is flat with solitary hills down which streams rush when the rain comes. Along the Red Sea coast and the southern coast of the Sinai Peninsula there are mountain ranges. The highest elevation in this area is to be found in the Jabal-al-Uwaynat massif, and near the coast several rather high peaks rise into prominence, the tallest of them being the Jabal Shaib al-Banat (2,187 m). In the Sinai, the rugged southern crests rise in places as high as 2,000 m. Mt. Catherine is Egypt's highest point with 2,648 m. The northern and eastern coastal plain is narrow and at its widest point does not exceed 30 miles. In addition to the Nile, the only permanent streams come from the mountains, most of them in the south of the Sinai Peninsula. The seasonal streams in the east run towards the Gulfs of Suez and Aqaba, while the few streams in the central plain of that peninsula drain into the Wadi-al-Arish, a depression in the heart of the Sinai Desert, which occasionally contains some water.

The Egyptian climate is rigorous in general because Egypt lies in the desert zone of North Africa. 30% of the territory is covered by sand. The Mediterranean coast has a temperate climate due to the influence of the sea, with the minimum temperatuture of 12°C and little rainfall. The Delta has also a Mediterranean climate but still less rainfall. Middle and Upper Egypt have Saharan temperatures with the minimum of 18°C and the maximum of 41°C. In both areas the average annual rainfall is 32 mm.

In the deserts, cyclonic winds raise sandstorms known as the *khamsin* (the dirty storm) between March and June. They are accompanied by sudden drops in temperature and in relative humidity. The winter season runs from November to March, while May to September are the summer months.
Brief history: The first Egyptian civilization emerged in the Nile Valley and the Delta around the year 4000 B.C. in two areas known as Upper Egypt and Lower Egypt. In 2778 B.C. they united as a monarchy which in the north extended as far as Syria and in the south touched on Nubia. Its economic basis was the extraordinary fertility of the soil- enriched by the alluvial deposits of the Nile floods- and it succeeded in building a prosperous civilization with a high level of culture for the privileged classes, the nobility and the high priests. The pharaoh Menes unified the kingdom and founded the first dynasty, as well as the world's first centralized theocracy based on the alleged divine origin of the pharaohs and the dominant position of the priestly aristocracy which was greatly influenced by the animist cult.

Moslem Arabs arrived between 639 and 641 A.D., and established military posts mainly for the purpose of collecting tribute. The native Egyptians rebelled against the burdensome payments, but the Arabs crushed the uprising and slaughtered the peasants. Those natives who converted to Islam were in general exempted from the payment of taxes, and thus it was that together with the penetration of the Arabic language and culture, as well as the conversion of many former Christians, Egypt became a major part of the Arab-Moslem civilization.

In 868, the Arab rulers of Egypt fell under the domination of the Fatimides, the alleged descendants of Fatima, the daughter of the Prophet Mohammed. That domination lasted until 1171, when power was seized by the Ayubi dynasty whose founder, the Kurd Saladin (Salah Addin), defeated at Hattin the King of Jerusalem in 1187. Gradually, the Turkish guards—the Mamelukes—acquired strong influence and in 1260 defeated the Mongol invasion of Egypt. From the middle of the 13th century to the early years of the 16th century the military leaders were the real rulers of Egypt and used the Turkish mercenaries for consolidating their hold on the country. In 1517, the Ottoman Turks invaded Egypt under the command of Salim I, and placed the country under their despotic rule which lasted until the 20th century.

In 1798, Napoleon defeated an army of Mamelukes near the pyramids, but eventually had to withdraw when confronted by a popular uprising secretly stirred up by the British. In the early years of the 19th century, the Albanian general Mohamed Ali ("The Lion of the Levant") overran Egypt, exterminated the Mamelukes, and drove out the remnants of Napoleon's army. He then proclaimed himself a pasha and was recognized as *khedive* (viceroy). His troops conquered a part of Arabia, Sudan, Syria and a part of Crete. In 1839, he defeated the Turks in the Battle of Nissip. England, Austria, Prussia and Czarist Russia imposed on him subordination to the Sultanate of Turkey, but accepted Mohamed Ali- who is considered as the founder of modern Egypt—as Viceroy. He was succeeded by his son Said who granted a French-controlled company the right to build a canal through the Isthmus of Suez. The project, directed by Ferdinand de Lesseps, was completed in 1869, when the Khedive, Said, gave the monopoly to operate the Suez Canal to an Anglo-French company for a period of 99 years. The Egyptian government was to receive 15 per cent of the proceeds from the opening of the canal, but in fact it got nothing at all until 1937.

In the last quarter of the 19th century Egypt was being ruined by the rising taxes taken out of the country and by exploitation on the part of emerging foreign monopolies, besides low agricultural production due to antiquated methods of work and an exodus of the farming population. The financial situation was aggravated by Egypt's great indebtedness to France and Britain.

This situation produced a popular uprising in 1881, led by Colonel Arabi Pasha, which was crushed by British military intervention in 1882. That year marked the beginning of the British colonial domination of Egypt, although it was not until 1914, when Britain proclaimed her protectorate over that country.

Due, among other causes, to the Anglo-French betrayal of the aspirations of the Arab peoples for self-determination, violent popular demonstrations took palce after the end of World War I, in 1919 and 1921, which forced the government in London to proclaim unilaterally on February 28, 1922, the independence of the Egyptian monarchy under Fuad I. Nevertheless, the country remained under the influence of British capital and continued to be occupied by British troops in a semi-colonial status. It was not until 1936, when Great Britain decided to sign a Special Treaty which established the limits of the foreign presence in Egypt, but kept under her heel its monarchy, then headed by the corrupt, millionaire King Farouk.

During World War II, the British used Egypt as a military base for their operations against the Nazi armies in North Africa. It was in Egypt, at El Alamein, where the Nazi Marshal Rommel was defeated in November 1942, at the very time when a group of lower-ranking Egyptian officers organized an underground opposition to Farouk's despotic regime and against the imperialist domination of their country.

On May 14, 1948, the State of Israel came into being in Palestine as a result of collaboration between the Zionist movement, the mandated power (Great Britain) and the United States. Egypt, one of the members of the newly established Arab League which had declared war on Israel, was defeated due to a lack of an effective military command. It was this factor which precipitated after the signing of the 1949 armistice the formation of a clandestine organization of Free Officers by members of the military, who had experienced that defeat on the field of battle.

In January 1952, Egypt found itself in a revolutionary situation which presaged the disintegration of the discredited pro-British monarchy of King Farouk and the traditional political parties of the Egyptian feudal and bourgeois classes.

On July 23, 1952, the Free Officers movement, led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, seized power practically without any bloodshed and spurred a most important nationalist revolutionary process. Three days later Farouk was forced to abdicate and the system of constitutional monarchy was abolished. General Mohamed Naguib was appointed Provisional President, to be later replaced by Nasser. The Nasserite movement proclaimed the anti-feudal and anti-colonial character of its programme, and gave priority to the liquidation of foreign military presence in Egypt. The 1923 Constitution, which had been still in force, was abolished as outdated.

In January 1953, the political parties were disbanded and their property was confiscated, as the government proclaimed a transition period of three years for the establishment of a democratic, constitutional regime. It also began talks with the government in London on the withdrawal of the British troops stationed in Egypt.

A republic was proclaimed on June 18, 1953, while a law was put into effect to regulate foreign investments in the country.

The year 1954 was a decisive one for re-asserting Egypt's national identity and independence. In the economic sphere, a project to produce iron and steel was launched with the construction of blast furnaces at Helwan and agricultural cooperatives were set up, just as a Housing Council, while an important trade agreement was signed with the Soviet Union. In the military sphere, British troops stationed along the Suez Canal assaulted Egyptian civilians, and the Nasser government lodged an official protest with the British government. Nasser announced that his country would resume negotiations on the future of the Canal only when the British recognized Egypt's national rights. In April, Egyptian forces repelled three Israeli attacks inspired by imperialist interests. The firm position taken by Nasser and his government forced the British to sign a preliminary agreement on the withdrawal of troops and British officials stationed along the Suez Canal and, for the first time, an Arab commander was appointed as the head of the Canal military base. The final treaty on the British withdrawal and the end of the British occupation went into effect on October 19. Barely a week later, an attempt to assassinate President Nasser was foiled. Shortly before the attempt, the President declared that no defence treaties with the Western powers were possible in the Middle East because the Arab peoples viewed them as colonialism in disguise.

In February and March 1955, Israel launched another aggression in the Gaza area. Shortly before, Egypt had refused to join the Baghdad Pact and President Nasser declared that he would promote the growth of Arab nationalism and repudiation of the policy of Arab compromise with a certain foreign power. The next month Nasser attended the Bandung Conference in Indonesia, which repudiated colonialism. In August, the Egyptian army repelled five Israeli attacks in the Gaza area.

Facing the threat of more attacks, Egypt signed contracts for the supply of arms from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, and the Arab League supported Egypt's right to obtain arms from wherever it thought best.

In 1955, Egypt signed a trade agreement with the Soviet Union. For its part, the United States announced that it would step up its arms deliveries to Israel. On November 2—the anniversary of the Balfour Declaration—the Tel Aviv government launched another aggression against Egypt, but the Egyptian forces again turned it back. At the end of that year Great Britain and the United States offered Egypt financial aid for the completion of the Aswan Dam. Also in 1955, Syria concluded a military alliance with Egypt and in March 1956, President Nasser for Egypt, President Kuwatly for Syria, and King Saud for Saudi Arabia issued a joint declaration in support of the rights of the Palestinians and the peoples of Southern Africa. On June 13, the Egyptian government decided to de-activate the British military bases in the area of the Suez Canal. Five days later the last British troops left the country. On July 25, 1956, the Egyptian government decided to nationalize the Suez Canal over which the Egyptian flag had already been flying since June 18 of that year.

A popular referendum was held in Egypt on a new constitution.

Faced by the threat of an imminent attack, the Egyptian government mobilized the People's Militia which, together with the National Guard, formed Egypt's Liberation Army. The Arab people supported the Egyptian position, as did the Soviet Union and the other socialist states.

In London, meanwhile, "internationalization" of the Suez Canal was being considered, upon which Egypt called for an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council.

Nevertheless, on October 29, Israel invaded the southern part of the Sinai Desert and two days later Britain and France issued an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of Egyptian troops ten miles west of the Suez Canal. The United Nations rejected the demand and called for the withdrawal of the Israeli troops. In obvious contempt of the United Nations, France and Great Britain dropped hundreds of paratroops into the Canal area as British planes bombed Egyptian airports and the towns of Suez, Ismailia and Port Said. turn, the Egyptian air force returned the attacks and shot down a third of the Israeli

25, a cease-fire ordered by the U.N. Security Council three days earlier went into effect.

In December 1973, a conference on peace in the Middle East met in Geneva and after its conclusion Egypt and Israel agreed to disengage their troops in the Suez Canal area. Thereupon Sadat re-established Egypt's diplomatic relations with the United States, which had been broken off during the 1967 war.

In 1974, Egypt opened its doors to foreign—especially United States—capital, and Sadat delegated his duties as Prime Minister to Abdul Aziz Hogazy who a year later was replaced by Mamdouh Salem, until then Minister of the Interior. Under United States sponsorship, an agreement was also signed with Israel on military disengagement in the Sinai Peninsula, while the Suez Canal was re-opened after having been blocked ever since the Israeli aggression of 1967.

As these events were taking place abroad, the domestic situation in Egypt—economic as well as socio-political—was turning from bad to worse. In 1975, students and workers demonstrated against the government, while in March of that year, workers struck in the textile—producing community of Mehalla el Kupra. A year later a similar event took place in Damietta, in the Delta area, where the police crushed opposition by 17,000 workers to government imposed measures. In the meantime, Sadat denounced Egypt's treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, signed in 1971, and the ruling party claimed victory in elections held in 1976.

The cost of living rose in that period to an unprecedented level, just as police repression, while President Sadat was unsuccessfully trying to achieve "peace at any cost" with Israel. Thereby, his government lost all respect in the Arab world.

The high cost of living, coupled with the cancellation of all government subsidies for items of daily need—a move recommended by the International Monetary Fund—produced massive protest demonstrations in Cairo and other large urban centres. The demonstrations were brutally suppressed by the police. Several dozen people were killed, hundreds were wounded, and some 200 arrested on charges of having inspired the demonstrations and distributed anti-government leaflets.

This repressive policy was parallelled by a policy aimed at liquidating the achievements scored by Egypt under President Nasser and at restoring to private ownership properties nationalized in the preceding period. At the same time, under United States pressure, President Sadat was working for a rapprochement with Israel. One of his moves in this respect was his visit to Jerusalem in November 1977.

Since then, growing protests have been voiced from different social and political groups in Egypt against Sadat's policy of surrender. Sadat also amended existing laws so as to permit his government to step up repressive action against any manifestation of hostility to his official policy, both domestic and foreign. In order to create the impression of democratic rule, Sadat established a new political party replacing the Arab Socialist Union and permitted the formation of a few additional political parties of an obviously conservative character. At the same time, the means of coercion designed to suppress any sign of opposition to his policy of closer ties with the West and a separate peace with Israel, completely abandoning the national claims of the Palestinian people and the principles of the Arab cause, were greatly strengthened.

After a number of bilateral contacts in Ismailia, Cairo and London, with the United States taking an active part in these negotiations as mediator, President James Carter convened a tripartite conference with President Sadat and Israeli Premier Menachem Begin in Camp David, Maryland, at the beginning of September 1978, The conference produced drafts of a separate peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and of an agreement granting alleged autonomy to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

After these drafts had been signed, Egypt and Israel opened negotiations in Washington on October 12, for the purpose of accommodating their respective positions on a draft peace treaty prepared by the United States. The two parties still disagreed on some formal aspects of the document, although they had reached basic agreement on the American draft, in spite of the universal Arab repudiation of President Sadat's capitulation, expressed at an Arab summit meeting which agreed on measures to isolate Egypt should it sign a peace treaty with Israel and which re-affirmed the position that the PLO was the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people.

On March 26, 1979, in the presence of President Carter, Sadat and Begin signed a separate peace treaty and a year later, on February 26, 1980, established normal diplomatic relations.

Arab and Egyptian reaction to these moves throughout 1979 and 1980 was one of repudiation of the peace treaty. It took different forms and had different consequences such as, for example, the boycott imposed by different Arab states, which has affected Egypt's economy.

On April 3, 1979, a group of Members of Parliament, representing the National Progressive Union Party (led by Khaled Mohieddin, a former member of the Free Officers movement) and a new party called the National Front, some additional independents, religious organizations, trade unions and other associations issued a manifesto condemning the Sadat-Begin treaty. Three prominent personalities from the Nasserite period, Zakaria Mohieddin, Hussein el-Chafei and Kamal Eddine Hussein also denounced "Sadat's treason".

On April 20, 1979, Sadat obtained according to official figures 99% of the vote in a popular referendum organized to approve the separate treaty. Subsequently, he dissolved the National Assembly. On July 7 and 14, 1979, parliamentary elections were held, in which only 40% of the electorate took part according to estimates and in which Sadat's National Democratic Party won 90% of the 382 parliamentary seats. Thus he eliminated for all practical purposes the progressive opposition, since 60% of the candidates had to run in the elections as "independents". Today, the Egyptian government recognizes the legitimate existence of three opposition parties—the already mentioned National Progressive Party, the Socialist Labour Party, and the Liberal Socialist Party which is of the extreme right. However, the Moslem Brotherhood and the Egyptian Communist Party are outlawed.

In order to assist from the outside Mohieddin's greatly affected National Progressive Union Party, an Egyptian Patriotic Front was formed under the leadership of the well-known film-maker Fouad el-Touhami.

In September, 56 persons were arrested on charges of "subversive activities", and many of them were also accused of membership in the Communist Party. They included lawyers, journalists, former members of parliament, students and workers. The next month the repression of trade unions was stepped up on the eve of elections. In the same month Sadat sent a military unit to King Hassan II of Morocco to help him fight the POLISARIO Front.

In April 1980, President Sadat went to Washington at the invitation of President Carter to try to prevent the final collapse of the Camp David agreements due to the intransigency of the Begin government. In the same month, Saadeddine Chazli, a former General and army chief-of-staff, a hero of the October 1973 war, announced in Beyrouth the formation of an Egyptian National Front to counter the normalization of relations with Israel with the aid—as Chazli himself declared—of the Arab governments of the Steadfastness Front. The former General had broken with Sadat in 1978.

Similarly, contradications developed in 1980 between the "*Rais*" and members of the Moslem Brotherhood who protested in violent demonstrations in March against the resifighters and bombers. Moreover, they destroyed about thirty British and French planes and sunk two ships of the British naval fleet. The Egyptian army and armed population repelled landings at Suez and resisted attacks on Port Said and other towns. The Soviet Union warned France and Britain against the serious consequences of their aggression against Egypt. The U.N. Security Council ordered the immediate cessation of hostilities, but the aggressors continued their military operations. The United Nations then dispatched an international police force to the area, and on December 23, 1956, the last British troops were withdrawn from Port Said, while the U.N. emergency force turned the control of the area over to the Egyptian army. About four months later the Suez Canal was cleared and re-opened to traffic.

In 1957, President Nasser decreed the nationalization of all foreign property, in particular that owned by France and Britain, created a People's Assembly, and consolidated his government.

On February 1, 1958, the United Arab Republic was constituted as a union of Egypt and Syria, which lasted three years. The union was approved in a referendum held in both countries and Nasser obtained 99% of the votes cast for the office of President.

In the early days of 1960, construction of the Aswan Dam began. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United States and Great Britain had cancelled a promised loan of 300 million dollars, upon which the Soviet Union offered to finance the construction of the dam which was inaugurated in January 1971.

In 1958, an expanded agrarian reform went into effect. It limited land tenure to 100 *feddan* (i.e. approximately 42 hectares) per person. An earlier agrarian reform law had limited land ownership in 1952 to 94 hectares. However, the feudal landlords stubbornly resisted any improvement of the peasants' *(fellahs')* lot. Then 90% of privately-owned enterprises came under state control and the Nasser government launched projects aimed at economic development and at the maximum possible elimination of the country's dependence on foreign capital. In the last quarter of 1961, a number of large landowners and big businessmen involved in a conspiracy were arrested, and at the end of the year poor peasants received land from the estates of foreign landowners. In June 1962, a Charter of National Action was adopted by the National Congress after a drafting process which had taken a whole year

On March 15, 1965, Gamal Abdel Nasser was re-elected for another term by the overwhelming majority of voters. When he appointed his cabinet, he promised to continue his nationalist and independent policy and to oppose all imperialist penetration.

The third Israeli aggression took place in June 1967. In a swift and surprising attack the Zionists seized Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank of the Jordan, and the Syrian Golan Heights. The overwhelming Israeli victory in the Six-Day War was due to Israeli penetration of the staffs of many Egyptian units. When the end of the hostilities was secured, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution demanding the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the occupied Arab territories, which Israel continues to ignore to this day. The closing of the Suez Canal and the Israeli harassment of its re-opening caused the people of Egypt losses in transit tolls amounting to some 3,000 million dollars, not to mention the losses caused by the destruction of the Canal installations, or the cost of clearing the waterway of the wrecks of ships sunk there by Israeli bombing raids.

In view of the Egyptian failure to halt the Israeli aggression, President Gamal Abdel Nasser submitted his resignation, but had to withdraw it following large-scale popular demonstrations in support of him. However, a thorough investigation was ordered of the armed forces commands and at the end of June an extensive reorganization was carried out which affected even the Minister of War, the Chief of Staff, and the commanders of the Navy, Army and the Air Force, who were all replaced. Several months later, the head of the Secret Service was also dismissed and shortly afterwards was imprisoned.

At the beginning of 1968, Nasser announced a programme of national reconstruction designed to eliminate the consequences of the Israeli aggression carried out with United States support, and to consolidate the country internally. Throughout the year, Egyptian and Israeli troops exchanged fire, including artillery bombardment, across the Suez Canal. This situation—a de facto military confrontation—also continued the next year. In the meantime, Israel set up military farming settlements in the territories it had occupied and forcibly dispossessed the Arab population in continued disregard of the United Nations resolutions and of world public opinion. In February 1969, Israeli warplanes destroyed an electric power plant and several bridges deep inside Egyptian territory, and also occupied the island of Kadra in the Red Sea. Then it launched a campaign of attrition along the Suez Canal, which lasted for two years and was ended only by United Nations efforts, although the arranged truce was violated by the Zionist troops on several occasions.

The continued tension caused by the military situation and his intense activity to promote Arab unity and the true independence of the Arab peoples undermined the health of President Nasser, the founder of modern-day Egypt. During a high-level Arab meeting held in Cairo to deal with the question of the Palestinian people's rights, the Egyptian President suffered a heart attack and died on September 28, 1970. This brought to power Vice-President Anwar Sadat who represented a more moderate trend within the government. On October 15 of the same year Sadat was confirmed in office and on November 11 also assumed the leadership of the ruling party, the Arab Socialist Union.

In May 1971, Sadat announced that a plot against his government had been discovered, and accused six cabinet ministers, three top officials of the ruling party, and high-ranking officers in the armed forces of involvement in the plot. According to the accusation, the plot was led by Vice-President Ali Sabry who was described as a follower of the Nasser line. In subsequent developments the most progressive elements in the government were dismissed from office and were also purged from the ruling party. By the middle of the month, only two original members of the original Free Officers movement which had overthrown the feudal monarcy in 1952, still remained in the new government.

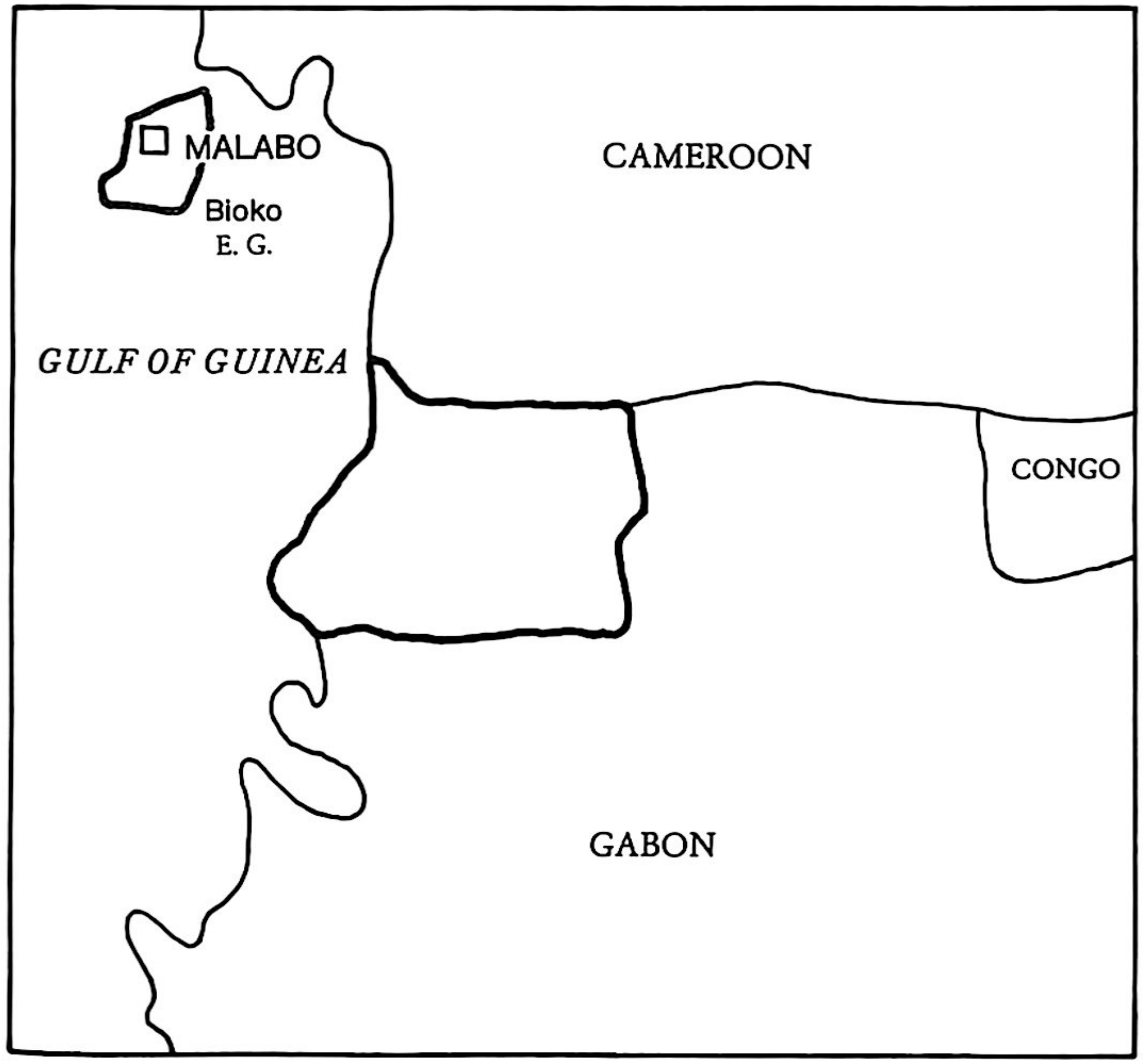
After a lengthy trial, the former Vice-President Ali Sabry, two ex-ministers and one top official of the ruling party were sentenced to death. Later their sentences were commuted to life imprisonment. That same year, strikes broke out in Alexandria and anti-government demonstrations took place in Cairo, while workers seized for brief periods factories in Helwan, Shibbin, Elkum and Tanta. At the beginning of 1972, student demonstrations occurred in the capital.

On October 6, 1973, the fourth Arab-Israeli war broke out with offensives launched simultaneously on the Egyptian and Syrian fronts. This time it was the Arab forces which had the initiative and the Egyptians crossed the Suez Canal and succeeded in capturing the second Israeli line of defence—the Bar Lev Line which had been considered almost impenetrable—after five days of heavy fighting and intensive deployment by both sides of tanks and other armoured vehicles. In the Golan Heights, meanwhile, Syrian forces also engaged Israeli troops. The Israeli air force was neutralized by ground-to-air missiles used by the Arabs who shot down or damaged more than a third of the enemy planes.

The United States hurriedly set up an airlift to supply Israel with military equipment from NATO bases in Europe. In addition, United States fighter-bombers, flown by mercenaries intervened in the fighting on the Israeli side. A report subsequently published by the Pentagon showed that in the course of the 1973 war alone, the United States had delivered to Israel military equipment worth more than 2,200 million dollars. On October

Public health: There is one hospital bed for every 470 inhabitants and one doctor for every 4,630. The average life span is 54 years.
Religion: More than 90% of the population are Moslems and 7% profess the Christian Coptic creed.

EQUATORIAL GUINEA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dency of the former Shah of Iran in Egypt. Differences also emerged between Sadat's regime and the Coptic community whose members in the United States organized protest demonstration during the Egyptian President's visit in Washington. President Sadat acted against both these trends when he announced in a long speech in Cairo on May 14, the prohibition of all Moslem organizations not legally recognized. It seems that this ban actually applies only to fundamentalist groups opposed to the Israeli-Egyptian peace, which have a decisive influence among more than a half of the 500,000 Egyptian university students.

President Sadat, who was designated in 1980 "President for Life" and who also assumed the office of Prime Minister, has admitted publicly--in interviews and speeches—his great concern about the Camp David accords whose implementation is being blocked by Israel's position on the status of Jerusalem and on the matter of Palestinian "autonomy". President Carter's electoral defeat in November 1980, and the problems faced by the Likud coalition in Israel have added new unknown quantities to the problem at a time when the United States is increasing its military presence in Egypt under the pretext of the situation created by the revolutionary process in Afghanistan and the conflict between Iran and Iraq. In the middle of 1980, Egypt's relations with the Ethiopian government took a turn for the worse due to Egyptian plans to divert the waters of the Nile to the Sinai in coordination with the Israelis. On June 5, Sadat ordered the commanders of Egypt's Second Army to prepare for a possible operation against Ethiopian territory. More or less in the same period, a state of emergency was proclaimed along the 300 km length of the Egyptian-Libyan frontier, as President Sadat increased his attacks against the leader of the Libyan revolution, Muammar Gaddafi. In 1980, Libya accused Sadat of aiding the pro-French faction in the civil war in Chad, led by Hissein Habre.

In recent years Egypt has intervened in different African countries in coordination with France, supporting neocolonialist regimes.

Economy: According to statistics published by the World Bank in 1979, Egypt's production has the following structure: Agriculture accounts for 28% of the gross national product, industry for 30% (24% is the share of the manufacturing industry), and services for 42% (all these figures are for 1977). 51% of the country's labour force works in agriculture, 26% in industry, and 23% in the services.

Of Egypt's total population in 1977, 56% were of productive age. The main agricultural products are cotton, wheat, barley, millet, maize, rice, bananas, dates, mangoes, grapes, citrus fruit, sugar cane, fibres, peas and dry legumes, tomatoes, potatoes, peanuts, linseed and sesame. Between 1972 and 1980, Egypt quadrupled its import of food products. Between 1965 and 1980, its agricultural output grew at the annual rate of 2%, compared with its 2.5% annual population growth (in Egypt a baby is born every 15 seconds). In 1977, livestock production included 2,148,000 head of cattle and 2,294,000 buffaloes, 15,000 pigs, 1,938,000 sheep, 1,393,000 goats, and 26,681,000 poultry. In 1975, the fishery sector produced 80,000 tons of fish, and Egypt's merchant fleet had 143 vessels with the total tonnage of 301,383 registered tons.

The important mining industry produced in 1978, 570,000 barrels of petroleum daily, a 40% increase compared with the previous year: it also produces iron ore and phosphates. Egypt's rather well developed industry, which has been greatly penetrated by foreign capital since the enactment of the Investment Law in June 1974 (*infitaah*—open-door policy) produces wheat flour, cotton yarn and fabrics, tyres, sulphuric acid, caustic soda, cement, motor cars, lorries, nitrate and phosphate fertilizers, electric power (most of it produced by the Aswan High Dam), and refined petroleum products.

In 1976, Egypt's structure of exports included 25% of liquid fuels, minerals and metals, 48% of other primary commodities, 17% of textiles and garments, 1% of machinery and vehicles, and 9% of other manufactured goods. In the same year, imports had the following structure: food 28%, fuels 6%, other primary commodities 7%, machinery and transport vehicles 30%, and other manufactured goods 29%. 62% of Egypt's exports in 1977 went to the advanced capitalist countries, 11% to the developed countries, 25% to the socialist countries, and 2% to the petroleum exporting countries with surplus of capital (World Bank figures). The value of 1977 exports was 1,726 million dollars, compared with 4,808 million dollars of imports. As reported by the World Bank, in the same year Egypt's gross national product amounted to 12,950 million dollars in world market prices, a growth of 7,900 million since 1970. At the end of 1977, Egypt's external public debt exceeded 12,000 million dollars. According to the International Monetary Fund, United States investments in Egypt rose from 343 million in the period 1953-1973 to 512 million in the period 1974-1977, and have reached the total of 855 million dollars. The cost of living in 1976 was 147.3% higher than in 1970. The national currency is the Egyptian pound which is divided into piasters. Income from the operation of the Suez Canal amounted to 450 million dollars in 1978 and 655 million dollars in 1980. On September 1, 1979, the government ordered the payment of customs duties on imports in dollars, which had an impact on the black market where the dollar was then worth 125 piasters. In August 1979, President Sadat asked the seven major capitalist powers then meeting in Tokyo for investments of 18,500 million dollars over the next five years in order to counter the effects of the Arab boycott of Egypt, which that year had caused an 8% drop in the country's exports and a 3% drop in imports compared with the previous years. Moreover, a number of Arab countries had withdrawn some 2,000 million dollars from the Egyptian central bank.

Government: The Egyptian constitution provides for a presidential government and a National Assembly of 392 members, (382 elected by universal suffrage and secret ballot for a term of five years). There are 25 governors in the country, representing at the provincial level the central executive power.

Armed forces: It is estimated that the Egyptian armed forces have some 750,000 men, most of them serving in the army. There is also a reserve force of about 550,000 men and a National Guard of 100,000 men. All adult men are subject to military service.

Organizations: Originally there was a political grouping known as the Arab Socialist Union. After President Sadat's rise to power, the official party organization tolerated three trends in its midst—a rightist (headed by Mustafa Kamel Murad), a centrist (which was the ruling group), and a leftist (headed by Khaled Mohieddin). In 1976, President Sadat himself announced the formation of three political parties, each representing one of the three above trends in the Arab Socialist Union. The Union was still active but limited its activities to matters of youth and women, and controlled the press. In September 1977, President Sadat prohibited all political groupings to form pacts or unions with other such groupings abroad, and subjected to approval by the Arab Socialist Union relations with any type of similar organizations abroad.

Education: At the present, illiteracy averages 56% of the population of adult and school age, according to 1975 figures. A literacy campaign was launched in 1970, but its exact results are not known. About 4,000,000 pupils are enrolled in primary schools which have some 90,000 classes. Enrollment in secondary schools, which have a capacity of more than 8,000 classrooms, is over 300,000. In 1975, there were 408,235 students attending Egypt's six universities. In addition, general and preparatory technical schools have 23,000 classrooms and 925,000 students, while 27,000 students attend teacher-training schools. During the government of Gamal abdel Nasser, 400 new schools were built every year.

On August 3, 1979, Lieutenant Colonel Teodoro Obenga Nguema Mbasogo, a nephew of Macias, assumed control of the country at the head of a Supreme Military Council. Macias fled but was captured ten days later near the frontier with Gabon. On September 24, the deposed President was tried on charges of treason, genocide, plunder of state property, and human rights violations. Found guilty, he was executed five days later.

The new government disbanded the political institutions created by Macias and announced its intention to alleviate the social problems and to improve the economic situation. In the international sphere, it re-iterated the country's adherence to non-alignment and to the Charter of African Unity. It re-established diplomatic relations with Spain and other Western countries, and declared that the property and land once owned by Spaniards would be restored to them. Close ties were established with Morocco. At the same time, the Supreme Military Council issued a decree intended to stimulate private foreign investments.

The Council is planning to draft a new constitution. In the meantime it is governing by decree and does not permit political activity.

Economy: The economy of Equatorial Guinea is based on agriculture. Of the country's total area of 2,805,000 hectares, more than 1,700,000 hectares are covered with forests. According to FAO figures published in 1977, 100,000 hectares are permanently under cultivation and another 130,000 hectares are suitable for farming.

The economically active population is estimated to number 99,000. FAO data also show that in 1978, Equatorial Guinea produced 6,000 tons of coffee, 7,000 tons of cocoa, 16,000 tons of bananas, and 84,000 tons of tubers for domestic consumption. Livestock estimates for the same year list 4,000 head of cattle, 33,000 sheep, and 8,000 goats.

Equatorial Guinea ranks among the world's poorest countries. In 1976, annual per capita income was estimated to amount to 130 dollars in Rio Muni and 330 dollars on Bioko. There are no reliable figures regarding foreign trade, the balance of payments or the national budget in recent years. The new government blames this fact on the administrative chaos which existed under the Macias rule. Most foreign trade—both exports and imports—is carried out with Spain. The national currency is the ekuele (bikuele in the plural), whose rate of exchange is 0.015 per U.S dollar. In June 1980, the government reported that the national budget showed 2,025,039,000 bikuele (30,375,000 dollars) of expenditure and 1,951,050,000 bikuele (29,265,000 dollars) of income.

Government: The Supreme Military Council which assumed power in August 1979 exercises both executive and legislative duties. The 1973 constitution was abrogated. The chairman of the Supreme Military Council, Teodoro Obenga Nguema Mbasogo, announced that a new constitution would be drawn up.

Organizations: There are no political parties in the country at the present. The organizations which had been subordinated to President Macias in the past were disbanded.

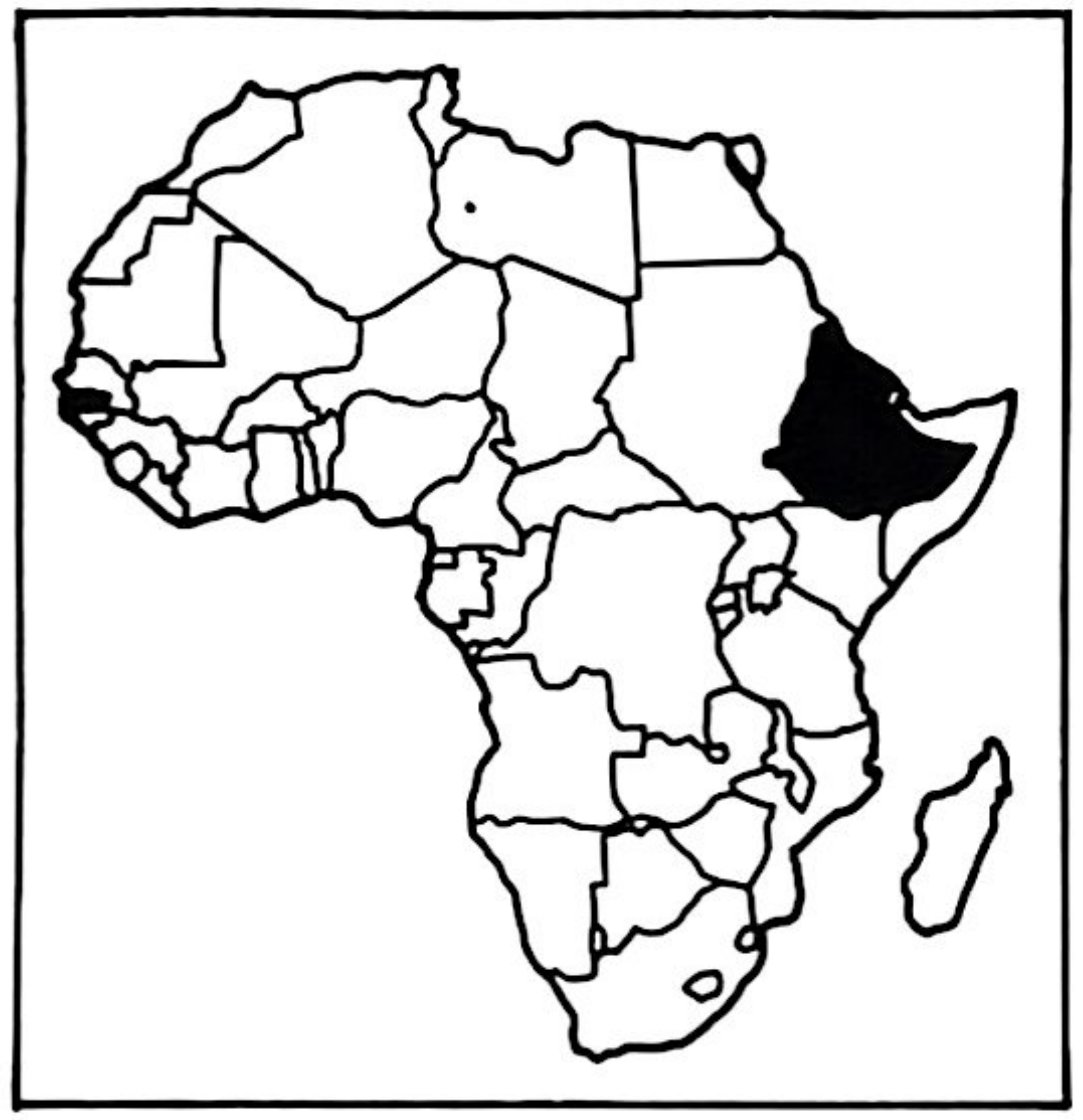
Armed forces: Equatorial Guinea has about 1,000 soldiers. A group of Spanish military advisers and a small Moroccan military contingent arrived in Malabo in October 1979.

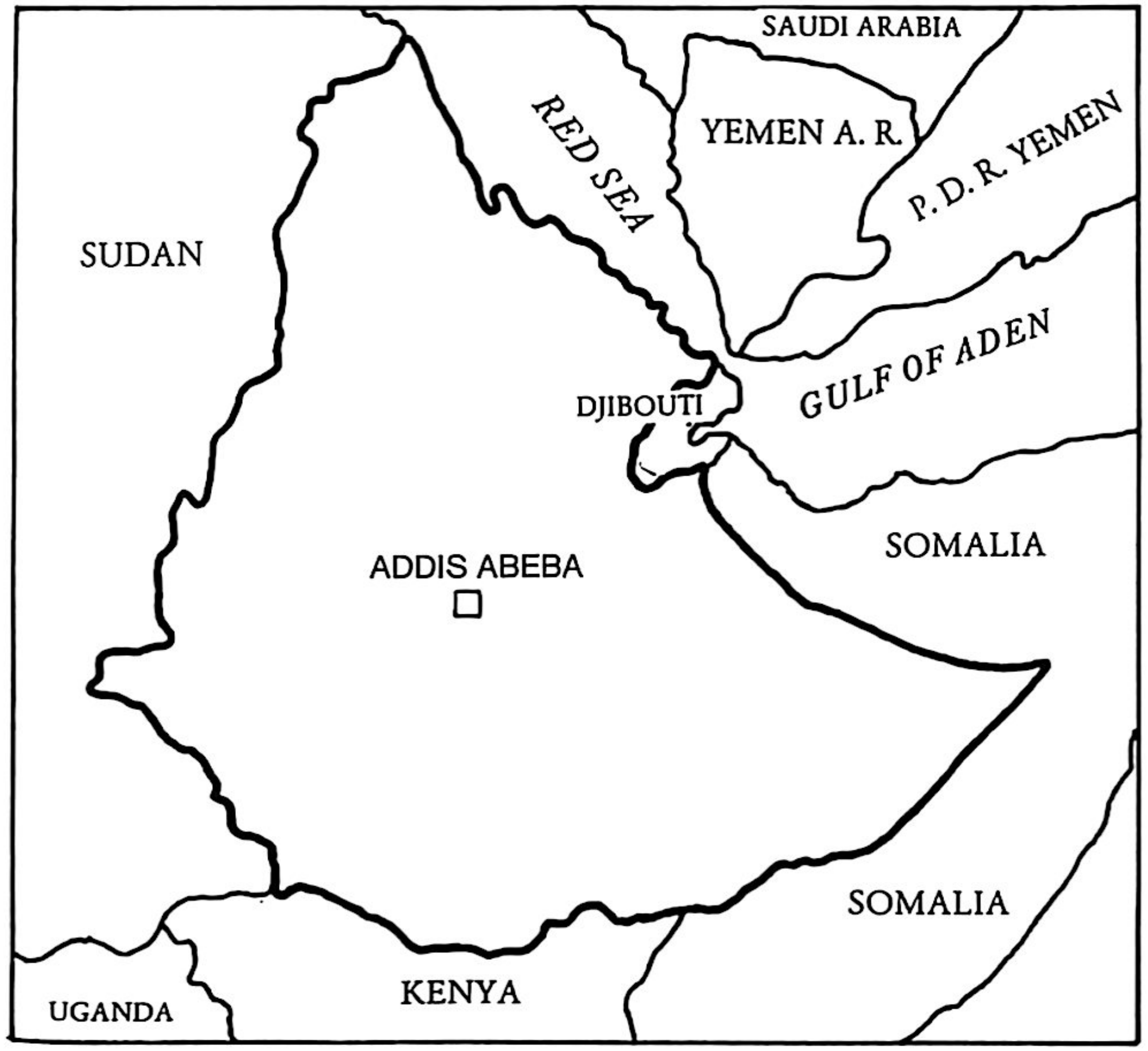
Education: According to estimates, the illiteracy rate inherited from the colonial period is 60%. There are no recent figures available on the number of schools and pupils attending them. It was reported in 1973, that primary schools were attended by 35,997 pupils and that there were 4,713 students attending secondary and vocational schools.

Public health: There is one hospital in the capital. In the interior of the country there are a few dispensaries and first-aid centres. Life expectancy is 43.5 years and the infant mortality rate is 53.2 per thousand live-born babies.

Religion: It is estimated that 60% of the population are Roman Catholics. The remainder practice traditional African cults, although there are small Protestant and Moslem communities.

ETHIOPIA





Official name: The Republic of Equatorial Guinea.
Area: 28,051 sq.km.
Borders: The country has a continental part—Rio Muni—and an insular part, Bioko Island, formerly known as Fernando Poo. Rio Muni borders in the north on Cameroon, in the east and the south on Gabon, and in the west is the Gulf of Guinea, which opens into the Atlantic Ocean. Bioko is situated in the extreme northwest of the Gulf of Guinea, opposite the coast of Cameroon. Also belonging to Equatorial Guinea are the small islands of Corisco, Great Elobey and Small Elobey, Annobon, Pagalu, and some additional islets.
Population: 350,000 inhabitants according to 1978 estimates. The population is made up of a number of Bantu tribes, such as the Fang, the Bubi, the Kombe, the Bujoba, the Annobo, the Boja, and the Balengue. There is also a group known as the Fernandino, who live on Bioko Island and whose members are descendants of former immigrants from America and from other African countries.
Capital: Malabo, which is situated on Bioko Island.
Principal cities: Bata and Luba
Languages: Spanish is the official language. Feng is spoken in Rio Muni and Bubi on Bioko Island.
Public holidays: October 12, Independence day.
Geography: The continental part covers 26,017 sq.km and together with the small islands of Corisco and Great and Small Elobey represents 90% of the country's total area. Its coast, mostly of black sand, is washed by the waters of the Gulf of Guinea. From the coast its territory rises until in the interior it reaches the elevation of 1,200 m on Mt.Mitra. The highlands of Rio Muni are an extension of the Crystal Mountains. The principal ports on the Gulf of Guinea are Malabo and Bata. The main rivers are the Muni, the Benito and the Campo.

The topography of Bioko Island consists of two volcanic formations cut in the narrowest part of the island by a valley extending from the east to the west. The coast is rocky with many promontories and inlets of various depth. The main peaks are Mt. Santa Isabel in the north, Mt. Moka in the centre, and the Gran Caldera in the south. The island has only very small rivers, the Cansul, the Ruma, the Tiburones, and the Baho.

The whole country lies in the equatorial zone with abundant rainfall and a high temperature which varies only little. There are two seasons—rainy and dry.

Brief history: The autochthonous population of Bioko Island were the Bubi, while the original inhabitants of the continental part of Equatorial Guinea were the Fang and tribes and ethnic groups coming from Gabon and Cameroon. Bioko Island was discovered by Fernando Poo between 1469 and 1474. Juan Santaron and Pedro de Escobar discovered Annobon in 1471 or 1472. However, the continental part suffered from constant raids by Portuguese, English, Dutch, French and Spanish expeditions. In 1778, the islands became a Spanish colony under a treaty concluded with Portugal in exchange for territorial concessions made to the Portuguese along the southern frontier of Brazil. Later, the Baptists, who considered the island a British colony, established a mission there. The British government, which wanted to establish a base there against slave traders, made an offer to Spain in 1839 to buy the colony, but the negotiations failed. Some years later, the French too, laid claims to this part of Africa. Under the Treaty of Paris, signed in 1900, Rio Muni, the continental part of today's Equatorial Guinea, came under Spanish rule and a new division of colonial spoils was agreed upon with France.

However, the Spanish occupation on the continent was almost non-existent and barely extended over a narrow, 20 km long coastal strip. The actual occupation dates from 1926-1927, when a military expedition demarcated the colony's eastern and southern frontiers.

In the period 1778-1968, the colonialists subjected the Guineans to a harsh rule, so that still in the 1950s the native population was divided between individuals of "limited emancipation" and "freemen", variants of slave-like segregation.

On November 28, 1963, the Spanish Cortes passed at its plenary session what was known as the Basic Law, which approved an autonomous regime for Equatorial Guinea. Its provisions went into effect nine months later.

Before independence, the country had three principal political parties: the Falangist MUNGE (the National Union Movement of Equatorial Guinea). the African nationalist MONALIGE (the Movement for the National Liberation of Equatorial Guinea), and the IPGE (the Popular Independence for Equatorial Guinea party). After the setting up of the autonomous government in July 1964, of which Macias Nguema became Vice-President, political fighting grew between these parties, which spilled over into the international sphere and forced Spain to reconsider its position with respect to Equatorial Guinea.

The United Nations decided in 1966 that a committee made up of representatives of 24 nations would intervene with Spain to legalize the independence of Equatorial Guinea through a constitutional conference demanded by the Guinean political parties and people. The first stage of the conference, held in Madrid in November 1967, demonstrated the people's aspirations to assert fully their political identity through independence.

The main demands raised by the Guineans were complete independence, a firm date for its granting, the formation of a provisional government, and the country's territorial integrity, all in keeping with United Nations recommendations.

From 1966 to 1968, the internal political struggle steadily grew in intensity because of the divergent interests of the three political parties and because the autonomous government had no competence to consider and concretely implement the independence agreements. After a stormy election campaign in 1968, supervised by U.N. representatives, the Nguema group prevailed with its "Red Cock" programme of social integration and national unity. A month later, on October 12, Equatorial Guinea was granted independence.

From that day on, the former metropolitan power proceeded to isolate the ex-colony. All qualified and skilled Spanish personnel were withdrawn in a move which caused many economic and administrative problems since there was not sufficient native personnel. The radio station in Malabo had to stop broadcasting because of a lack of spare parts, and was unable to re-open until 1977.

On March 5, 1969, Macias foiled an attempted coup headed by the then Foreign Minister, Atanasio Ndongo. From then on, Macias Nguema began to control personally the issuance of exit and entry visas, and, in fact, the entire political and economic life of the country.

When he took office, Macias announced that he would pursue a nationalist policy of social development, and in his foreign policy expressed his adherence to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and his country's support of the national liberation movements in Africa. He sought the assistance of the socialist countries in the realization of his educational development and public health programmes. In 1970, he founded the Partido Unico Naciona—the Sole National Party—whose name was changed a year later to the Sole National Workers' Party (PUNT).

However, as the years passed, Macias Nguema increasingly centralized power in his hands and created a true autocracy. He appointed himself President-for-life, re-named the former Fernando Poo Island after himself, and personally exercised executive, legislative and judicial powers. Most of the original plans were abandoned and the economic problems grew ever more acute. Pay owed to soldiers provoked great disontent in the armed forces.

Official name: Socialist Ethiopia.
Area: 1,221,900 sq. km.
Borders: In the northwest and west it borders on the Sudan, in the south on Somalia and Kenya, and in the east on Somalia and Djibouti. In the northeast it touches on the Red Sea.
Population: In 1979, United Nations estimates indicated a population of 30,420,000. 90% of the inhabitants live in rural areas. The annual rate of population growth was 2.5% in 1978.
Capital: Addis Ababa (1,200,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Asmara, Dire Dawa and Harar.
Languages: Amharic is the official language. However, other major languages are also spoken, such as Oromo, Tigrina and Somali, as well as dozens of different dialects.
Public holidays: April 6, Anniversary of the Entry of Patriotic Troops into Addis Ababa (1941) and September 12, Anniversary of the Victory of the Revolution (1974).
Geography: Ethiopia is situated in the eastern part of the African continent and has a complex topography the main feature of which is the high central Shawa Plateau (2,400 m above sea level on average) through which cuts diagonally the Great Rift Valley as well as the deep gorges of many rivers. In the north, the Semien range rises more than 4,500 m above sea level and includes the continent's third highest elevation, Mt. Ras Dashan (4,625 m). In general, the deep strata of the subsoil date back some 4,600 million years, and on them, successive layers of limestone and sandstone formed, partially covered by hundreds of metres of sediments and volcanic rock. Volcanic activity continues and there are many thermal springs in the country. In the east, mountain ranges rise from 2,400 to 3,700 m, including Mt. Escuelo (4,311 m). In the extreme north, these ranges touch on the northern part of Eritrea, where erosion has cut down to the basaltic rock, or sandstorms have denuded limestone and sandstone layers.

The other important geographic region is the Western Lowlands which border on the Sudan. Further to the south and west the Blue Nile (Abbai) has cut a 2,190 m deep gorge between the Gojjam massif in the north and the Shoa Plateau in the south. The Blue Nile flows from Lake Tana and in Khartoum, in the Sudan, joins with the White Nile. Other rivers in this area are the Tekase and the Baro. Between the upper reaches of the Genale and Shebele rivers which flow south-east is the basaltic Bale Plateau (2,812 m), which in the east slopes down to the Harar Plateau the average elevation of which is about 300 m above sea level. This plateau extends to the southeast and the vast Ogaden desert plain which is still lower and is more eroded. In the extreme east are the Eastern Highlands and the Sidamo-Borana hills, some 300 m above sea level, which are no less affected by erosion.

In the upper parts of the Great Rift Valley are the lakes Zway, Abyata, Langano, Shaja, Awasa, Abaya, and Chamo. Steep slopes, 40 to 65 km apart, rim the valley in the east and west. In the north, several streams join to form the Awash River. Another important stream is the Omo River which empties into Lake Rudolph. Ethiopia has a coastline of some 800 km on the east-central part of the Red Sea. Massawa is the principal port. Running parallel with the coast is a desert depression with many salt lakes, some of them lying below sea level. A part of this area forms a region of the province of Eritrea.

Ethiopia's tropical climate is made more temperate by the elevation of its territory, which means that the country benefits from its predominantly mountainous character. The minimum median temperature varies from 13° to 16°Centigrade, while its maximum is about 29° Centigrade. However, in the high altitudes the temperatures are lower, but at sea level in Massawa the average temperature is 31° Centigrade.

In the Danakil Depression in the northwestern part of the country and in areas lying below sea level, extreme temperatures have been recorded, which rank among the highest in the world. The coldest month of the year is January and the hottest is May, but in some high-lying areas the coldest temperatures occur in July. Rainfall is governed by south-westerly winds. Between June and September, the high-pressure areas prevalent in the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Guinea force air masses to move into the interior of the continent, and when these high-pressure areas encounter low-pressure areas over the Sahara Desert and the Middle East, rain falls in the higher regions of the country. In the lowlands of southeastern Ethiopia there are two rainy seasons, one in the spring, the second one in the autumn. Average annual rainfall ranges from 50 mm at Assab in the northeast to 2,500 mm at Gora in the southwest.

Most vegetation is to be found in the humid and cool high-lying areas, while the lowlands are generally dry and hot. Woods cover only 7% of Ethiopia's area. The western highlands are covered with pastures, grassland and some shrubbery. In the southwest, thanks to plentiful rainfall, there are tall trees and ferns, creepers and thickets. The flora of the high-lying areas is predominantly subtropical—conifers, trees with perennial foliage, mimosa trees, and other trees and plants. In general, there is vegetation up to the altitude of 3,000 m above sea level and above that line there are only occasional patches of grass and plants typical of high altitudes. In the lowlands there is a great variety of acacia trees and in the sparsely settled areas also of eucalyptus trees. In the south of the Great Rift Valley there is a fertile plain with plentiful pastures, acacia groves and other trees.

Most notable of the fauna typical of Ethiopia are a species of goat, of which only a few hundred survive in the Semien Mountains, and the nyala, known as the "king of the antelopes", as well as the Semien mountain fox. The predators include the spotted hyena, several species of jackals, the wild dog, and a type of fox with small and flat ears. The antelopes include the large kudu, the oryx, the fleecy fallow deer, and the common deer. There are many wild pigs and other species of wild animals which cause great damage to the crops. There are small numbers of lions, rhinoceroses, elephants, buffaloes, giraffes, zebras and a few leopards.
Brief history: Human presence on the territory of today's Ethiopia dates back to prehistory. In some parts of the country—in the Omo River Valley, Umm Hagar and Wollo—archaeologists have discovered remains of man some two to six million years old, which rank among the oldest known.

The emergence of human civilization in Ethiopia is due to a unique phenomenon—the encounter and gradual merger of two different peoples with distinct cultures. They were the Cushites, probably the original inhabitants of the area, and Semites who came mainly from the south of the Arabian Peninsula. The result was the formation of a new civilization of a multinational character.

These peoples, who came to the present-day territory of Ethiopia in successive migration waves, settled in the high-lying areas, as reported by Egyptian hieroglyphic inscriptions, as long ago as at the end of the second millenium B.C., but it is estimated that this process of settlement lasted until approximately the 4th century A.D. In their texts, the ancient Egyptians called these people "Habashat", a name which, it is believed, is the origin of the subsequent name given to the country, i.e. Abyssinia.

It seems that between the 6th century B.C. and the 1st century A.D. there had been close ties between the Egyptians and the peoples settled in the northern part of present-day Ethiopia, with the former wielding powerful cultural influence over the latter. The Sabeans, the 15th Egyptian dynasty, had a profound impact on Ethiopian culture and religion, and left a marked imprint on the subsequent development of the country.

A merger of different groups of immigrants, primarily the Agezat, with the peoples living on the plateau, gave rise to a new state in the Tigrai region, which had its own, specific features. It was there, where the city of Axum was founded, which became the political and religious centre of the country between the 1st and 7th centuries A.D. and which at the peak of its glory provided evidence of the historical events which had taken place in the cultural sphere in that era—the conversion of the pagan kingdom of Axum to Christianity in the 5th century A.D. and the formation of an autochthonous language with its own script (the only such case in the whole African continent), which emerged from the cultural fusion which had occured on today's Ethiopian territory.

Eventually, the Axum kingdom turned into an empire, because due to the growth of its military and naval power it expanded to the Red Sea and established its domination over the neighbouring peoples on the Arabian Peninsula, such as the kingdoms of Himyar (525), Saaba, Rayden and Salhen, as well as, on the other side, over the Meroe kingdom on the Upper Nile. The empire was known equally as Axumite or Solomonic since it was believed that Menelik I, to whom the founding of the Ethiopian state is attributed, was the son of King Solomon and Queen Makeda of Saaba or Sheba.

In 572, the Persians landed in Aden and drove the Ethiopians into the interior of the African continent. This was followed by thirty years of Arab raids against Ethiopia, which gradually broke up the Axumite Empire.

The Moslem expansion which engulfed the kingdoms existing along the coast between Egypt and Ethiopia united their peoples who began to invade the interior where the Christian religion predominated, especially in Nubia. This expansion, which began in the 7th century, continued until the 9th century, when the Axumite Empire completely fell apart.

The Zagwe people, who were settled in the centre of the Axumite realm, took advantage of the Axumites' decline and shifted the centre of power to the city of Roha in the Lasta region which was their territory, and there founded a dynasty which ruled Ethiopia from the 12th century. The Zagwe did not have the support of the Coptic Church which accused them of not being Solomonics and waged a campaign against their dynasty, which ended in the 13th century with a revolt by adherents of the Solomonic dynasty, who then seized power in the country.

This restoration of the Solomonic dynasty took place in the province of Shoa, further inland, where the dynasty continued to rule until the 16th century. Throughout that period, the Coptic Church maintained its religious hegemony. Eventually it achieved a complete merger with the state, while different esoteric doctrines proliferated within its ranks, all of which resulted in a relative isolation from the Christian West.

In 1520, Emperor Lebna Dengel (1508-1540) received an ambassador from Portugal which favoured Ethiopian domination of the Red Sea from where the Egyptians and Indians had been driven out.

The Christian kingdom on the Ethiopian plateau waged in that first half of the 15th century a fierce battle against Moslem armies in the south and east of the country, which were led by Ahmed Gran and which wanted to conquer the highlands.

The subsequent Turkish invasion of Ethiopia in the 16th century was facilitated by the contacts the Turks had with local Moslems who rebelled. However, an uprising among the inhabitants of the southern part of the country, provoked by interruption of trade with Egypt and India, gave rise to long wars against the Turks who again tried to invade the country in 1578 and 1579, but on both occasions were defeated by the Ethiopians.

Emperor Fasilidas (1632-1667) chose a new capital for his realm and among other steps also expelled Jesuit missionaries who had been active in the country for a number of decades. The capital, Gondar, grew into great splendour, the reason why this period in

Ethiopian history is known as the Gondar period.

In spite of major conlicts between the Galla and Tigre peoples, the empire experienced and era of remarkable feudal growth and glory, in the course of which emerged various regional kings of considerable significance and the most prominent among them continued to be known as the King of Kings. This situation lasted until the 20th century, although not without a number of dynastic changes.

A military chief from the interior, by the name of Kassa, put together an army and overthrew the emperor, thus ending the Gondar period of the country's history. Kassa proclaimed himself emperor in 1855, assuming the name Theodor II, set up his capital in Magdala, and strove for the unification of the still fragmented country.

After his death, two key personalities appeared on the scene—Menelik, the king of the Shoa region, and Kassa, the chieftain of the Tigre area. Kassa was crowned in 1872 as Emperor Johanma IV, following an understanding with Menelik on Ethiopian unity. The King of Shoa recognized Johanma IV as the King of Kings, but in actual practice two spheres of influence were defined—Johanma's in the north and Menelik's in the southern part of the country. Together, both sovereigns worked for the political and religious unification of Ethiopia.

In 1875 and 1876, Johanma waged a victorious military campaign against the Egyptians and in the next decade fought against Sudanese dervishes and the Italians who had seized the Red Sea port of Massawa in 1885.

The emperor died in 1889 in the battle of Metemma, and Menelik was crowned as his indisputable successor, taking the royal name of Menelik II. When he ascended to the throne, he had already considerably extended the country's frontiers in the south, east and west, having joined to Ethiopia the area of Kaffa in 1881, and having re-conquered the Imamate of Harar between 1885 and 1887, as well as the Ogaden region in 1891. Later he also added to his realm the Borana area in 1896-1897, thus enhancing his prestige as unifier of the empire.

At the end of the last decade of the 19th century, the contradictions between Menelik and the Italian invaders in the coastal area on the Red Sea reached their climax. Italy wanted to establish a protectorate over Ethiopia as a whole on the basis of the Treaty of Uccialli, concluded with the Ethiopian sovereign in 1889. Menelik rejected this attempt and launched a military campaign against the invaders whom he finally defeated in the Battle of Aduwa, fought on the plains of that name in the north of Ethiopia on March 1, 1896.

This victory of an African army over a well-equipped European forced demonstrated to the entire world the resolve to maintain an independent existence, which has always characterized the Ethiopian nation. The victory at Aduwa is viewed as the beginning of modern Ethiopian history and established Menelik II as the founder of the modern Ethiopian state. It checked the Italian advance into the Ethiopian heartland, which had the blessings of the French and the British who laid claim to other parts of East Africa and implicitly supported the Italian attack on the region's mainstay of independence. Italy withdrew to its possessions in Eritrea.

After its defeat at Aduwa, some recognized the absolute independence of Ethiopia and the Italians signed a new treaty in Addis Ababa on October 26, 1896, which annulled the Treaty of Uccialli. Next year, France and Great Britain recognized the Ethiopian state, and diplomatic missions from those two powers and from other European countries began arriving in the Ethiopian capital. The events of the end of the 19th century consolidated the independent position of the country which remained the only part of Africa to escape the colonial division of the continent.

large-scale famine decimated the peasant population of the vast Wollo region, causing the death of some 200,000 people.

In 1960, while the emperor was on a visit to Brazil, a group in the imperial army tried to stage a coup using Asia Wosen, the emperor's son and heir to the throne, as a figurehead. The attempt, led by the officers Girmene and Mengistu Neway, failed when it found no support in the armed forces.

The plotters were savagely punished when Selassie returned home.

In 1962, the Regional Assembly of Eritrea voted for complete integration with Ethiopia, which took place the very same year.

Also in 1962, Addis Ababa played host to the constituent session of the Organization of African Unity—the OAU—in which 32 independent countries took part. The OAU adopted as one of its fundamental principles support of the struggle against colonialism and neocolonialism. The new organization, which was gradually joined by all the African states which gained their independence in subsequent years, established its headquarters in the Ethiopian capital the next year. Addis Ababa was also chosen in 1958 as the seat of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

Following the decline of British power in the area, the Haile Selassie regime promoted an accelerated American penetration of the country. Beginning in the 1950s, Ethiopia became the major African recipient of U.S. economic and military aid. Americans served as advisers in the army and in other imperial institutions. At the Kagnew base in Asmara they built the largest American communications centre outside the United States, and Ethiopia played an important role in the Pentagon's plans for controlling the Red Sea and a large sector of the Indian Ocean.

Between 1973 and 1974, new famines decimated the rural population, brought about by a long drought. More than 400,000 peasants died in the Wollo and Tigre areas.

The rise in fuel prices at the beginning of 1974 affected taxi drivers in Addis Ababa who staged a strike in February of that year with the support of teachers and students. The emperor's repressive forces attacked the demonstrators, killing more than forty of them.

A month later, as a repercussion of the taxi-drivers' strike, a military mutiny broke out and rapidly spread throughout the country. In spite of changes made by the government in the cabinet and the appointment of Endalachew Makonnen as Premier in place of Aklilu Habte-Wold, who had held the post since 1961, the popular movement continued gaining strength until it reached its climax in April with a military uprising that swept the entire country.

Confronted by the extent of this movement, the emperor promised the convening of a Constitutent Assembly and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. However, the workers' organizations rejected this manoeuvre and called a general strike. The strikers were joined by several thousand priests who demanded the dismissal and trial of the high church hierarchy.

Repression was stepped up throughout the country. Hundreds of peasants perished by the hand of the imperial army in Gojjam, Bale, Sidamo, and Wollo. The government closed the university and higher educational centres, banned the distribution of revolutionary literature, and expelled diplomats from the socialist countries.

In June 1974, a Coordinating Committee of the Armed Forces, the Police and the Home Guards was formed and in less than three months won the support of the popular masses, and succeeded in isolating the emperor in his feudal court.

On July 22, the last cabinet approved by the emperor was dismissed and on the demand of the Coordinating Committee, Lij Mikael Imru was appointed Premier.

A swift military operation on September 12, 1974, brought about the detention of the emperor and put an end to the feudal regime in Ethiopia. Earlier, the Coordinating Commitee had presented evidence of unchecked plunder of the public treasury by the emperor, the imperial family and the nobility, and of the total absence of any attempt to assist the victims of the famine in Wollo and Tigre. This helped to unmask before the large illiterate masses of the country's population the true substance of the imperial regime.

After the overthrow of the emperor, the 1955 constitution was annulled, the parliament was dissolved and a Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) was constituted, which assumed the supreme duties of the government. A few days later, an advisory civilian body was formed to work closely with the PMAC in governing the country.

Lieutenant General Aman Mikael Andom was appointed President and head of the Provisional Military Government. However, a month later, Aman was dismissed and accused of participation in a conspiracy against the government's progressive line and of speculation. He committed suicide in prison some days later. Appointed to the post of First Vice-President was Major Mengistu Haile Mariam, while the office of Second Vice-President went to Colonel Atnafu Abate.

On November 27, 1974, Brigadier General Teferi Benti was appointed Head of State and President of the Provisional Military Administrative Council.

On December 20, 1974, the PMAC issued a declaration stating that the government had adopted socialism as its political line. The orientation of Ethiopian socialism, as outlined in the declaration, gives priority to the welfare of the community over that of the individual, establishes government control over the natural resources necessary for the economic development of the country, and envisages cultural development on the basis of equality of the different ethnic groups inhabiting the country.

At the beginning of 1975, the Ethiopian state launched a programme of nationalization of the country's financial, commercial and industrial establishments, which initially affected more than a hundred foreign companies, as well as a programme aimed at the development of the rural areas; the latter was known as the Campaign of National Development Work Through Cooperation (ZEMETCHA).

On March 4, 1975, a decree instituting an agrarian reform was published, under which all land holdings passed into the hands of the Ethiopian people. This ended feudal servitude in the rural areas. This decree was of special significance for the masses of Ethiopian people, the great majority of whom are peasants and who were the beneficiaries of the new law. Since then, March 4th is considered a holiday in the country.

May Day was celebrated for the first time in Ethiopian history on May 1, 1975.

Within the framework of the socialist programme of the PMAC, the government assumed control of private schools on September 29, 1975.

On April 21, 1976, the Ethiopian government announced the Programme of the National Democratic Revolution, which is the platform of the Ethiopian revolution.

On January, 13 1977, a Commission for Higher Education was formed for the purpose of defining the objective of the educational effort in the country.

On February 3, 1977, an attempted coup was foiled. It was led by Brigadier General Teferi Benti, Lieut. Colonels Asrat Desta and Hiryu Haile Selassie, and other officers. The main plotters were arrested, tried and executed on the same day.

On February 12, 1977, the PMAC issued a decree defining its powers and duties, and at the same time announcing the appointment of Mengistu Haile Mariam as President of that body, while Atnafu Abate was appointed its Vice-President.

In November 1977, Vice-President Atnafu Abate also tried to stage a coup, but the

The unification of the Ethiopian empire was parallelled by a process of modernization launched by Menelik. In 1880, the emperor moved his capital to the central region of Shoa where he chose Addis Ababa as the definite seat of the imperial capital, a decision officially proclaimed in 1887. The next year, the first hospital was opened in the new capital. In 1902, a railway line was inaugurated, linking Dire Dawa with the French possession of Djibouti on the Red Sea. After some differences and disputes with its French builders, the railway was extended to the area of Akaki near the capital in 1915. In 1907, Menelik II constituted the first cabinet in Ethiopia's history for the purpose of assisting him in ruling the country, and in 1911, the first Ethiopian government printing shop was opened.

In 1906, the European powers with interests in the Horn of Africa—France, Great Britain and Italy—wanted to force upon Ethiopia a treaty which, in fact, would have given them the right to interfere in the internal affairs of the country, but which was rejected by Menelik.

Two years later, in 1908, Menelik signed a treaty with Italy on the frontiers of the so-called Italian Somalia, which eventually was used by the Italians as a pretext for invading Ethiopia in 1935.

Before he died in 1913, Menelik set up a regency which was to run the country until grandson and heir Lij Iyasu could assume the government.

In 1916, following a confrontation with the nobility of the Shoa region, Lij Iyasu was deposed in a palace coup and one of Menelik's daughters, Zauditu, seized power in the absence of a male heir in the line of succession. At the same time, Tafari Makonnen, a son of Ras Makonne, a famous general who had distinguished himself in the war against the Italians, was confirmed as regent and heir to the throne. Tafari Makonnen headed a group known as the "Young Ethiopians", which promoted the idea of a more centralized government. This was opposed by the feudal aristocracy which found support in the new empress.

In 1926, Tafari Makonnen assumed control of the army and in 1930, following the death of Empress Zauditu and the defeat of various attempts to check the power of the regent, proclaimed himself emperor, taking the name of Haile Selassie I.

On November 2, 1930, he was crowned in Addis Ababa with great pomp—the last Emperor of Ethiopia, who throughout the 44 years of his rule preserved the feudal base of the country in spite of some formal modernization moves essentially aimed at promoting his personal prestige on the international scene.

The new emperor consolidated the power of the large landowners and land tenure as the foundation of the feudal regime. At the same time, however, he retained his hold on all the aspects of the government in opposition to the state institutions.

Similarly, the emperor aimed his domestic policy at fomenting the existing ethnic, regional, linguistic and religious divisons with the objective of preventing the formation of a movement of national unity which could endanger his rule.

In 1923, Ethiopia joined the League of Nations. In 1931 it was given its first written consititution providing for the establishment of a two-chamber parliament which in practice merely sanctioned the decisions of the emperor and was used to mollify the nobility which essentially constituted its membership. A National Bank was formed in the same year to replace the old Bank of Abyssinia, a private institution.

Meanwhile, since 1930, Mussolini's Italy had been preparing to invade Ethiopia as the key element in its plan to establish a large empire in the Horn of Africa. A clash between Italian and Ethiopian troops took place in 1932 in the Wal Wal area deep inside Ethiopian territory. An Ethiopian complaint to the League of Nations produced no result. In 1935, already on the eve of the Italian operation against Ethiopia, France and Britain, which controlled the sea and land approaches to the country, announced an embargo on the supply of armaments to the two parties in dispute, a move which favoured the already obvious Italian superiority in military equipment.

On October 3, 1935, without any declaration of war, Italy invaded Ethiopia. The League of Nations found Italy guilty of aggression, but no agreement was reached on sanctions against it.

Faced with growing popular resistance which surpassed its expectations, the fascist government in Rome decided to use poison gas which quickly tipped the balance in favour of the invaders. On May 5, 1936, the troops which had launched their attack from Italian Somalia reached the capital of Addis Ababa.

In the face of the Italian advance, Haile Selassie left the country. While the Ethiopian people organized resistance against the Italian invaders, the emperor went to Geneva to plead the case of his country against Italy in the League of Nations.

In spite of the heroic resistance of the Ethiopian people, the superiority of the Italian army eventually prevailed and the country was completely occupied.

The conquest of Ethiopia was recognized in 1938 by Great Britain. The occupying forces devoted special attention to the construction of lines of communication with the intent to consolidate their domination of the whole country. There were also plans to settle about a million Italians in Ethiopia, but these were frustrated by a growing popular opposition against the presence of the invaders, demonstrated with particular intensity in the regions of Shoa, Amhara and Gojjam. The assassination of General Graziani, the commander of the Italian troops in Addis Ababa, in February 1937, was followed by the notorious massacre in the Ethiopian capital, when thousands of Ethiopians were killed by the Italian occupation troops.

In spite of Mussolini's declaration of war on France and Great Britain in 1940, the British at first showed no sympathy at all for the Ethiopian rebellion against the fascist invaders. It was not until 1941 when the Allied forces finally launched an offensive against the Italians. A British army advanced into Eritrea from the Sudan while other British troops attacked from Kenya. Addis Ababa fell to the Allies in April 1941 after five years of Italian occupation.

In spite of Haile Selassie's immediate return to Ethiopia, the British retained for a number of months control of the government, until Selassie had to negotiate with them on the restitution of his power.

The result of the negotiations was an Anglo-Ethiopian treaty signed on January 31, 1942. After some attempts to preserve their de facto power in the country, the British eventually chose to try expanding their economic influence. Nevertheless, they occupied the important region of Ogaden, which they formally did not return to Ethiopia until 1948, but even after that date and until 1954 they held some areas in the east of the country.

Once back on the throne, Selassie approved a new constitution, appointed a cabinet and opened the parliament whose members were exclusively feudal lords.

In 1952, the United Nations gave the former Italian colony of Eritrea the status of an autonomous unit federated with Ethiopia under the sovereignty of the Ethiopian Crown.

A new constitution was adopted in 1955, differing from the previous one in form. Under its provisions, a Lower House was to be elected by popular vote with secret ballot, whereby greater popular representation in the government was seemingly achieved. But the Senate remained unaltered with its members being appointed, as usual, by the emperor.

However, the situation in the country did not change in spite of the emperor's reforms. Such natural disasters as droughts added to the economic and social problems. In 1955, a attempt failed and he was executed.

In March 1977, the leaders of Ethiopia, Somalia and some other progressive and revolutionary countries met in Aden, the capital of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, in order to find a peaceful solution to the conflict between the two neighbouring countries, provoked by Somali territorial claims to large parts of Ethiopia, as well as to Djibouti and parts of Kenya. On that occasion the Somali leaders promised not to attack Ethiopia. However, by that time the Somali leadership hade made its preparations for its subsequent aggression against its neighbour.

In the middle of that year, Somalia used its regular troops to assist two groups operating in the Ogaden area as a cover for Somali aggression—the Front for the Liberation of Western Somalia and the Somali Abo Liberation Front.

On July 24, 1977, regular Somali army troops crossed the frontier into Ogaden province and other Ethiopian regions. Those troops succeeded in seizing some 320,000 sq. km of Ethiopian territory.

On August 24, 1977, a huge popular demonstration in Addis expressed support for the general mobilization ordered by the PMAC some days earlier in order to repel the Somali aggression.

At the end of the year, the Ethiopian revolution found itself in a difficult situation. Internal counter-revolution, encouraged by reactionary forces abroad, stepped up its sabotage operations and assassinations. In Eritrea, separatist forces under the leadership of the rightist faction of the movement and with the assistance of reactionary Arab states, launched an offensive against the Ethiopian revolutionary army and militia.

Faced by this situation, the Ethiopian government asked the Cuban government in November 1977 for military specialists who began arriving in December 1977.

An Ethiopian offensive, launched on January 22, 1978, soon dislodged the Somali aggressors who were virtually defeated by March 14 of the same year.

The Ethiopian victory put an end to Somali territorial ambitions, although the government in Mogadishu has not formally renounced them. The end of the aggression made it possible for the revolution, which had uprooted feudalism, to concentrate its efforts on the solution of the immense economic problem the country had inherited from the imperial regime. The Somali defeat also promoted the overall stability of the region, especially that of the small state of Djibouti, which had gained its independence in 1977 and which is included in the areas claimed by Somalia as its own. Kenya, which periodically suffers from aggressive acts and infiltrations originating in Somalia, also improved its relations with Ethiopia after the war.

In September 1978, within the framework of celebrations marking the fourth anniversary of the revolutionary victory in 1974, an International Conference of Solidarity with the Struggle of the African and Arab Peoples was held in Addis Ababa, which was attended by a large number of representatives of progressive and revolutionary forces.

In December 1979, the formation of an Organizing Commission of the Ethiopian Working People's Party (COPWE) was an important step in the consolidation of the Ethiopian revolutionary process. The chairman of the PMAC and Chief of State, Mengistu Haile Mariam, announced the statutes of that organization which has a General Assembly, a Central Committee, an Executive Committee, regional and provincial committees, and basic organizations throughout the country.

In June 1980, seven months after the announcement of its formation, COPWE held its first congress in Addis Ababa. It was attended by 1,500 delegates from all parts of the country. According to official comments, the event reflected the unity of the vanguard of the Ethiopian revolution, resolved to establish a political party which would guide the continuation of the revolutionary process and the definite elimination of feudalism and capitalism in the country.

COPWE held its second plenary session in February 1981 in order to review the progress made in the constitution of the party and the general situation in the country.

Economy: Ethiopia is basically agrarian in character. Of the country's total area of approximately 1.2 million sq. km some 50% are pastures, 9% are cultivated, 21% are deserts or marshland, 10% are streams and lakes, and 9% are covered with forests.

According to FAO figures, some 13 million hectares of land were under cultivation at the beginning of the 1970s. The current campaign of agricultural development, pursued by the revolutionary government is based on a planned expansion of cultivated areas.

Before the revolutionary victory in 1974, agriculture accounted for 48% of the gross national product and in 1977 it rose to 52%.

The principal agricultural products are cereals, including teff, which is a native crop and the staple food in the central part of the country, and barley. In 1977, the most important crops as reported by the FAO were teff and other cereals (1,270,000 tons), barley (830,000 tons), wheat (529,000 tons), maize (1,150,000 tons), sugar cane (1,249,000 tons), vegetables (414,000 tons), and coffee (175,000 tons).

In the same year Ethiopia had 26,119,000 head of cattle, 23,149,000 sheep, and some 966,000 camels.

It is estimated that more than ten million people work in agriculture, i.e. 88% of the economically active population, but there are no exact figures in this respect.

Since the nationalization of the land in 1975, more than nine million peasants have associated in some 27,000 agricultural associations which are getting state subsidies for their development. These associations, in turn, form producer cooperatives which together with state farms form the base of the agricultural development plans. There are some 2,500 of the latter institutions throughout Ethiopia. According to the latest figures on the National Revolutionary Campaign of Economic Development, which began its first stage in 1978, in 1980 agriculture had raised its share of Ethiopia's GNP by 5.6%.

In the first year of the Campaign, 84,000 hectares of previously unproductive land were added to the agricultural production capacity. In 1979, 134,000 hectares of such land were put under cultivation, and in 1980 it was hoped yet another 250,000 hectares of land would be similarly improved. All in all, over the next ten years, more than a million hectares of new land are expected to be made productive. At the same time, the use of fertilizers is being increased and special emphasis is being laid on the production of coffee as the country's main export item. Coffee accounts for approximately 70% of Ethiopia's income from foreign trade. The volume of coffee exports was 77,000 tons in 1978, it rose to 100,000 tons in 1979, and according to official data it amounted to 127,825 tons in 1980. In 1978, a Ministry of Development of Coffee and Tea Production was established to control the production of these crops of vital importance for the Ethiopian economy. It is estimated that between 1979 and 1980 the total production of coffee exceeded 200,000 tons.

A reforestation campaign is currently under way to cope with the chaos which was inherited from the feudal regime in the exploitation of the country's timber resources. Ethiopia has some 3.5 million hectares of forests, although vast tracts of forests have disappeared due to indiscriminate exploitation. In 1979 alone, 45 million new trees were planted, with is 24 times more than in the pre-revolutionary period. In 1980, 55,000 hectares of land were reforested. Timber production was 24,290,000 cu.m in 1975.

Manufacturing industry accounted for 15% of Ethiopia's GNP in 1977. The industrial sector includes mainly the manufacture of cotton fabrics and other products from cotton, but also some food products, processing of tobacco and sugar cane, bottling of mineral water and production of beer. 7,600 tons of paper were produced in 1979. Industrial development plans calling for a 37% increase in production by the manufacturing industry between 1979 and 1981 have been successfully implemented.

180,00 tons of cement were produced in 1981 in cement mills in Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa and Massawa, but by 1984 this quantity should rise to 300,000 tons as a new mill is put into operation at Mugher, which is being built with the technical assistance of the GDR and with Cuban aid. In 1976, 480 million kWh of electric power were produced, while the petroleum refining capcity was approximatedly 740,000 tons annually.

Although it has immense possibilities, the mining sector has been little exploited. According to 1976 figures, 933 kg of gold, a small quantity of platinum and 1,018,000 tons of salt were produced. Gold production was under the control of the emperor and was concentrated mainly in the Adola area in the south of the country. There are plans to expand it, as well as to prospect for nickel, potassium, copper, coal, petroleum and natural gas.

Ethiopia has two important railway lines—one linking Djibouti with Addis Ababa over a distance of 880 km, 89% of it on Ethiopian territory, and the other one running from Masawa via Asmara to Agordat over a distance of 306 km. There are three airports of international standard—at Addis Ababa (Bole), Asmara and Dire Dawa. Ethiopia's two principal ports are Asab and Masawa; in 1978 the volume of their operation was 60% greater than in the preceding year. Nevertheless, most of Ethiopian foreign trade is channelled through the port of Djibouti. The country has a network of some 9,000 km of all-weather roads, but it services only 12% of the national territory. Links with the interior of the country are mostly by air.

The current development plans envisage a 6.2% annual growth in the GNP according to a statement published in February 1981. In the course of the first seven years of the revolution launched in 1974, the annual rate of GNP growth was 5.6%. International organizations calculated that in 1978 Ethiopia's GNP amounted to 3,640 million dollars.

The country's balance of trade has been showing deficits. In 1978, Ethiopia imported goods worth 522 million dollars but its exports amounted only to some 310 million dollars.

Per capita annual income in the same year was 115 dollars. Foreign-exchange reserves in 1979 stood at 156 million dollars. The national currency is the birr which replaced the previous Ethiopian dollar instituted by the imperial regime. Its fixed rate of exchange is 2.07 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) is the top governing body in the country. It sets the general line of government policy and elects a Central Committee which appoints a Standing Committee of sixteen members, which, in turn, approves the decisions taken by a Council of Ministers.

The chairman of the PMAC is at the same time the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and President of the Security Council. That body also has a Secretary General and a Deputy Secretary General.

Armed forces: It is estimated that the regular army has some 50,000 men, while the strength of the People's Militia is about 300,000.

Organizations: An Organizing Commission of the Ethiopian Working People's Party (COPWE) was constituted in 1979, headed by Mengistu Haile Mariam. It held its first congress in June 1980 and a second plenary session the next year.

The All-Ethiopia Trade Union was founded in January 1977 by the merger of eight trade union organizations. It has more than 300,000 members and the scope of its activities has been substantially enlarged by the revolution of 1974 when compared with the workers' organizations which had existed under the imperial regime.

On May 5, 1978, the All-Ethiopia Peasants' Association ended its constituent congress. It has nine million members organized in more than 2,000 local associations in the country's fourteen regions.

All the aforesaid organizations, just as those associating women and the youth, which are being formed at the present, have been initiated and sponsored by the Provisional Bureau for Matters of Mass Organizations (PBMMO), established in 1976.

Since the revolution, Neighbourhood Associations *(kebelles)* have been organized in urban areas. Among other matters, they are charged with the administration of communal affairs, rent control, the setting of the amount of monthly rent in individual cases, school supervision in the respective neighbourhood, and protection of the revolutionary achievements. These bodies have organized committees for the defence of the revolution and are the democratic means whereby the Ethiopian people administer affairs affecting their respective community and become involved in the process of improving the living conditions of the population. Thus far, some 1,500 Neighbourhood Associations have been set up throughout the country.

Education: Before the victory of the revolution, a UNESCO study showed that between 95 and 98% of Ethiopia's population were illiterate; this was a figure unparallelled anywhere else in the world. Only some 500,000 children—out of the total of 9,000,000 children of school age—attended classes with some regularity. At the secondary-school level (boys and girls older than fifteen) only 0.3% of children in the respective age category attended school, most of them sons of the feudal and bourgeois classes and of government officials.

After the overthrow of the feudal regime, a giant task was undertaken to overcome the abysmal educational backwardness of the country. Already in the first years of the revolutionary process a nationwide campaign (ZEMETCHA) was launched, when some 50,000 students brought the rudiments of education to the rural areas.

A National Literacy Campaign officially began in 1979 as the most ambitious project of its kind in the history of the African continent. It was estimated at that time that some 28 million people in Ethiopia were illiterate. According to plans, the campaign was to be concluded in urban areas by June 1980 and in the rural areas, where most of the country's population live by 1984. It was initially estimated that in September 1979, some 1,300,000 individuals should have been learning to read and write, but actually, on that date, 4,600,000 individuals were attending regular literacy courses as a result of the enormous enthusiasm evoked among the population by the education crusade waged in Ethiopia's five principal languages—Amharic, Oromi, Somali, Tigre and Wollo. By October 1980, when the fourth stage of the campaign was initiated, eight million individuals had learned to read and write, and already some 60,000 teachers were involved in the project.

Meanwhile, between 1974 and 1980, the number of pupils receiving primary and secondary school education had risen 60% and the number of schools 80%. In 1979 alone 500 new schools were built and in 1980, 800 more schools were expected to be completed.

In the latter year, 2,500,000 pupils attended primary and secondary schools, and there were 30,000 primary school teachers. There were 5,213 primary schools, 712 secondary schools, and 169 superior secondary schools. Some 3,400 new teachers graduated in 1980, and it is expected that in future about 5,000 new teachers will complete their training every year.

The University of Addis Ababa had more than 29,000 students in 1980, attending

Official name: The Republic of Gabon.
Area: 267,667 sq. km.
Borders: In the north Gabon borders on Equatorial Guinea and Cameroon, in the east and south on the People's Republic of the Congo, and in the west is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 544,000 inhabitants according to 1979 United Nations estimates and 1,050,000 inhabitants according to figures published by the Gabonese government. As for its ethnic composition. 66% of the population are of Bantu origin and 33% belong to the Fang group. Other ethnic groups include the Kota, the Adouma, the Okande and the Bateke. Of the 30,000 foreigners living in the country, 20,000 are French. The annual rate of population growth was 1.2% in the period 1970-1974.
Capital: Libreville (170,000).
Principal cities: Port Gentil and Lambarene.
Languages: French is the official language, but different African languages are also spoken.
Public holidays: August 17, Independence Day.
Geography: Located on the coast of West Africa astride the Equator, Gabon is quadrangular in shape and is almost completely covered with dense forests. Its Atlantic coast is 1,200 km long.

There are three distinct geographical areas. The first are coastal lowlands 30 to 200 km wide with many large bays formed by the estuary of the Gabon River and the delta of the Ogooue River. The altitude of this coastal plain does not exceed 300 m and under ground there are considerable mineral riches.

East of the coastal plain lies the second area with many deep rivers and streams. It is characterised by plateaux which rise from the coastal plain and extend to the north and east of the country, as well as to one part of southern Gabon.

Mountains are the basic feature of the third area which includes the Crystal Mountains, 900 m high and lying in the north, and the Chailly Massif, which forms the watershed and where lies the highest point in the country, Mt. Iboundji, rising to the altitude of 1,575 m.

Gabon has many rivers, among which the longest one is the Ogooue (1,200 km). It divides the Gabonese territory into two parts and empties into the Atlantic Ocean. It is navigable over a stretch of 350 km. Its tributaries include the Lvindo (600 km) and the Sebe. The Lolo and the Abanga rise in the northern frontier area, while in the south flows the Ngounie over a distance of 400 km. The latter is partly navigable. Other important rivers are the Mbei, which forms the frontier with Equatorial Guinea, the Nyanga and the Como, both 54 km long.

Gabon's climate is hot and humid with constant rainfall which exceeds 2,000 mm annually.

Forests cover 85% of the country.

Brief history: Portuguese navigators were the first Europeans to arrive at the coast of the territory, which they named Gabon (Gavao), at the end of the 15th century. In the first half of the 19th century, French ships intervened on both sides of the Gabon estuary under the pretext of obstructing illegal slave traffic.

In 1839, Captain Bouet-Villaumez signed treaties with King Louis Dowe, the chief of the area north of the estuary, and King Denis Rapomtohombo, the ruler of the lands south of the river. Thus the country was opened up for conquest and colonization by the French who were attracted to it by its wealth of timber and mineral resources.

In 1843, the French built the Aumale fort and 50 liberated slaves settled there in 1849; their settlement, Libreville, was the site of the future capital.

Between 1860 and 1880, the French explored the valley of the Ogooue. In 1887, Savorgnan de Brazza penetrated to the upper reachers of the river and the Congo basin. He signed a treaty with the ruler of the Bateke, which opened Central Africa to the French. The Berlin Congress recognized French claims to the territories explored by Brazza, who was appointed Commissioner-General of the French Congo (which included Gabon) in 1886.

In 1903, the territory was transformed into an administrative colonial unit with frontiers fixed by the metropolitan power, and in 1910, under the name of Gabon, became a part of the Federation of French Equatorial Africa.

With the enactment of the new French constitution in 1946, Gabon became an "overseas territory" of the French Union with formal representation in the French parliament (one deputy and one senator). Ten years later, a titular Government Council was formed with the colonial governor at its head and with Leon M'ba holding the vice-presidency.

When the Territorial Assembly of Gabon proclaimed a so-called Autonomous State within the French Community, M'ba was appointed head of the provisional government in recognition of the services he had rendered to the metropolitan power.

A month before the proclamation of independence, on July 15, 1960, the government signed a "mutual assistance" treaty with France which continued to control the country's defence, external relations, economy, communications, and culture.

As a result of amendments to the French constitution, the independence of Gabon was officially proclaimed on August 17, 1960. In February of the next year, a constitution was adopted of the new republic, which instituted a centralized presidential system of government, and in the same month M'ba had himself elected president in elections described as fraudulent by his opponents. Once installed in the supreme office in the country, M'ba concentrated in his hands all power and imprisoned all his political opponents.

At the beginning of 1964, he dissolved the National Assembly in order to eliminate the parliamentary representation of members of the sole opposition party, Jean Hilaire Aubame's Gabonese Democratic and Social Union. M'ba then called new elections to fill the seats of his adversaries with members of the Gabonese Democratic Bloc (BDG).

This situation led to a military insurrection on February 17, 1964. However, it was not an outcome of a progressive movement, but merely took advantage of the aforesaid conditions and was essentially the product of a power struggle waged within the framework of inter-tribal rivalries.

The coup was staged by a group of low-ranking officers and civilians, and power in the capital of Libreville passed into the hands of a Revolutionary Council which demanded M'ba's resignation. Subsequently, a provisional government was set up under Jean Hilaire Aubame, the leader of the opposition Gabonese Democratic and Social Union. This sudden but bloodless overthrow of M'ba, who had close ties with French interests, brought about a quick reaction from the government in Paris. President de Gaulle ordered a rapid transfer to Gabon of French paratroop units from their bases in Senegal, Chad, the Ivory Coast and Madagascar, taking advantage of a military cooperation agreement between the two countries.

The Gabonese capital became the scene of bitter fighting and bloodshed. The French forces stationed in the aforesaid countries intervened, seized the capital, imposed a curfew, and reinstated M'ba, at the same time arresting the leaders of the opposition movement. In April, M'ba's BDG party won an ample majority in the National Assembly in the elections he had originally called.

Albert Bernard Bongo was appointed Gabon's Vice-President in November 1966. In April 1967, the National Assembly passed a law granting the President full powers to dissolve the parliament and to call new elections whenever he felt it convenient.

both day and evening courses, and a thorough university reform was carried out, under which higher education is accessible to students from the poorest strata of the population.

Between 1974 and 1980, some 4,630 Ethiopians studied at universities abroad and on scholarships provided by international organizations and the socialist countries. The number of Ethiopian students in those countries was 1,406 in 1980.

Ethiopia's educational plans show that between 1981 and 1982, regular courses—i.e. other than those organized within the framework of the National Literacy Campaign—will be attended by 1,500,000 persons more than in 1974.

Public health: When the 1974 revolution prevailed, the medical and sanitary conditions existing in Ethiopia were among the poorest in the world. There was one doctor per 350,000 inhabitants and one hospital bed for every 3,500 inhabitants. However, even these figures do not reflect the true situation, since the great majority of the doctors and of the hospital facilities were concentrated in the capital and the principal cities. Addis Ababa had 25 of the 83 hospitals in existence in Ethiopia, and 48% of the total of 8,066 hospital beds. The great majority of the sick poor perished without receiving any medical assistance and, according to conservative estimates, 60% of the newly born died without ever reaching the doors of a medical centre. Average life expectancy was barely 35 years. It is estimated that only 15% of the Ethiopian population had access to medical assistance. In the face of this dismal situation, the revolutionary government has given preferential attention to an improvement of the public health services; through various campaigns and under special plans, the number of hospitals has grown especially in the rural areas, and young people are being encouraged to study medicine and nursing, since these fields are no longer a privilege of the rich and mighty.

It is estimated that in 1978, the number of doctors providing services in an even distribution throughout Ethiopia's 14 administrative regions had grown 100% in comparison with 1974. In the same year the number of hospital beds had risen to 17,000 and the number of polyclinics was 75% higher than four years earlier.

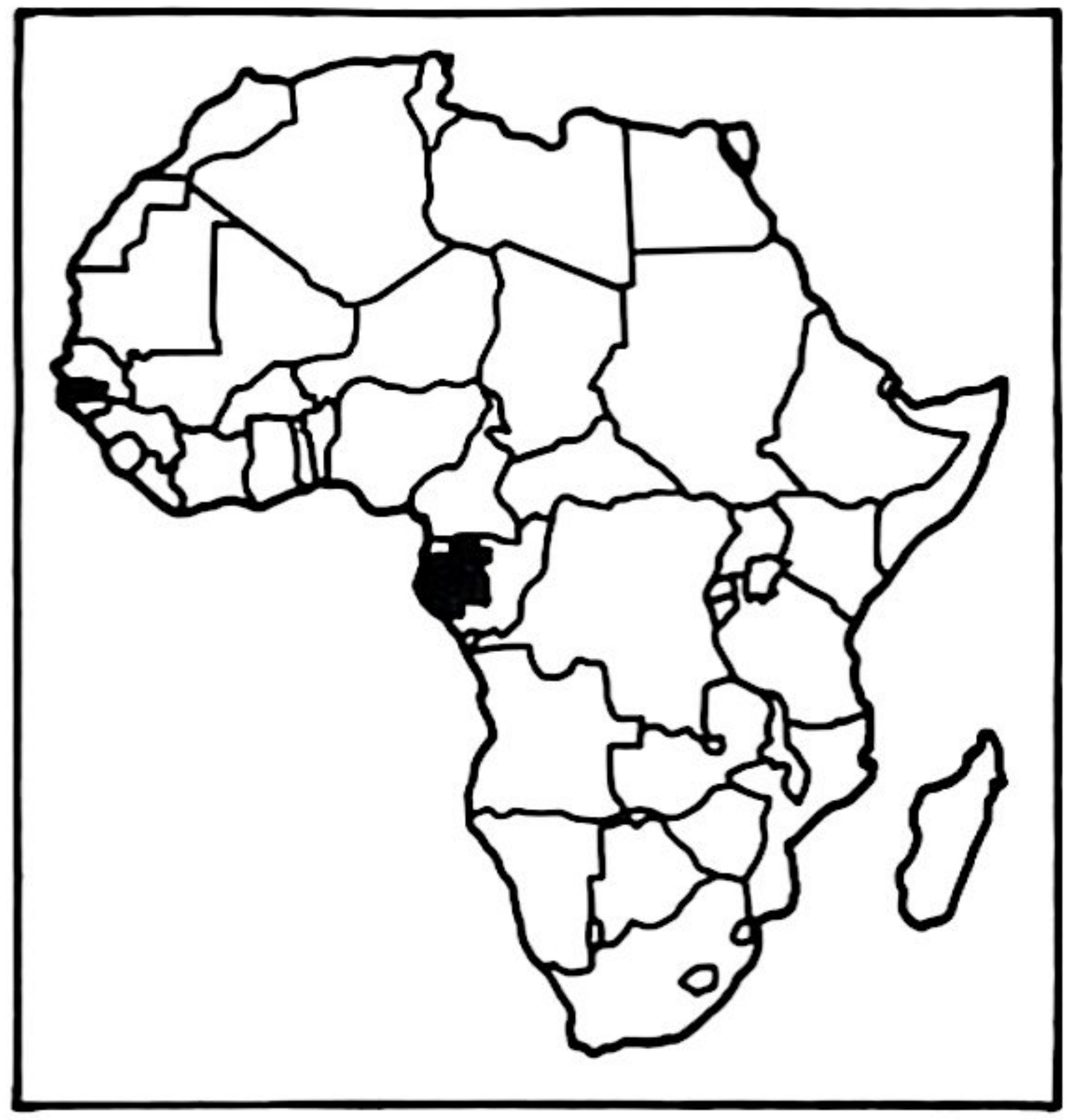
A nationwide campaign was launched in 1979 against a large group of children's and other communicable diseases which had been decimating the population, including measles, whooping cough, poliomyelitis, diphtheria, tuberculosis and tetanus. This campaign is a part of a project to eliminate communicable diseases, which was begun throughout the country in 1977. In 1978, Ethiopia announced the eradication of smallpox within the framework of a programme carried out under the control of the World Health Organization.

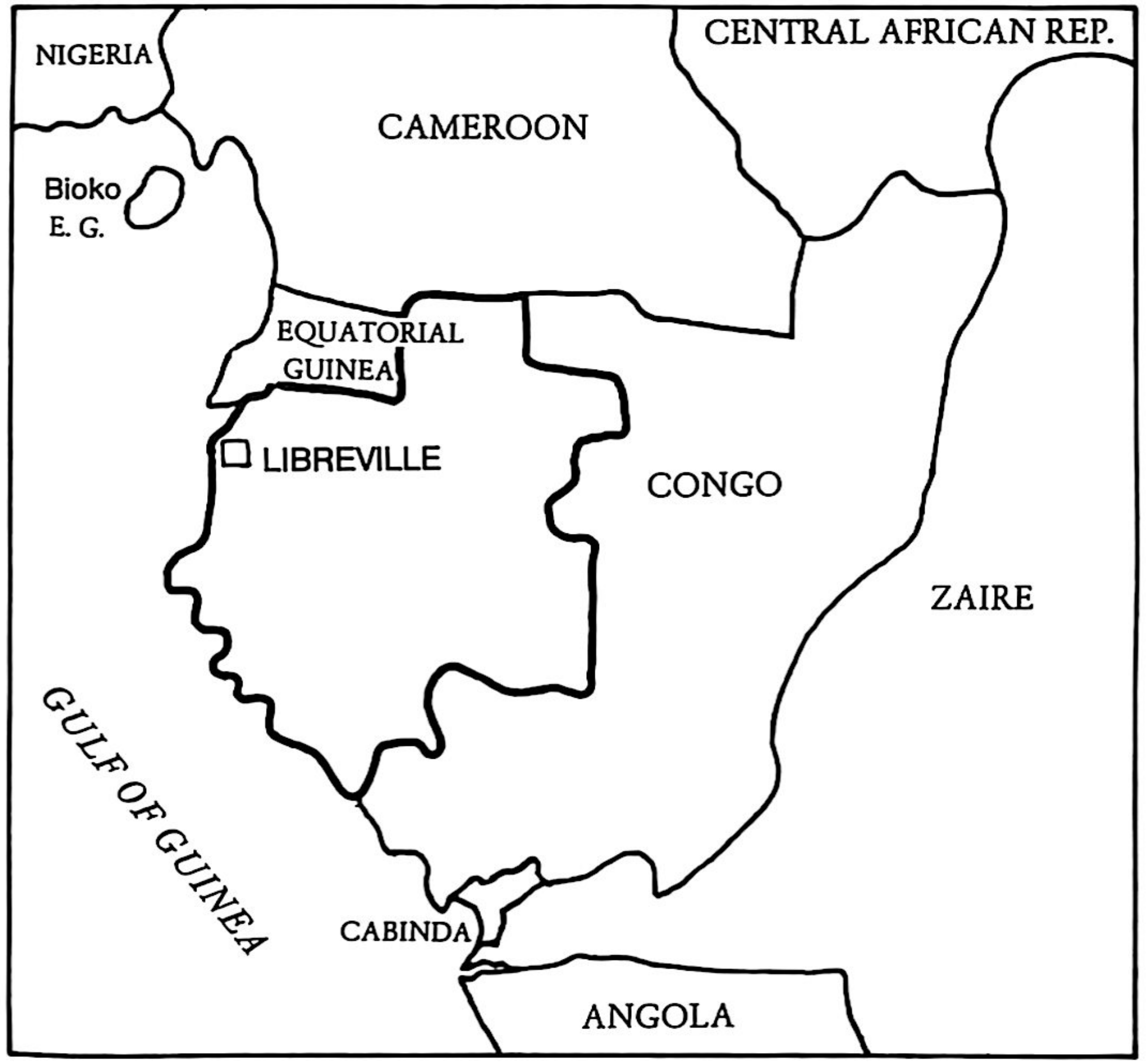
According to 1980 figures, the number of hospital and medical aid facilities in Ethiopia already reached 1,500, while medical assistance has been made accessible to one fifth of the population. The number of medical students had tripled by that year.

According to official data, in 1984 there should be 800 new medical aid centres and 80 new medical centres of the highest professional level. By that year, too, medical services should be accessible to 50% of the population.

Religion: The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, also known as the Christian Coptic Church, predominates with about 50% of the population professing it. This church officially separated from the Coptic Church in 1946. Moslems constitute about 40% of the population, and the rest profess animist cults. There are also some 50,000 Falasha Jews.

GABON





Bongo was confirmed as Vice-President in March 1967, in a move paving the way for the eventual replacement of M'ba who was undergoing treatment in France for some time because of a prolonged illness.

In common with France, Gabon was one of the African countries which approved of the secession of the Nigerian province of Biafra and offered its separatists assistance against the Nigerian federal government. Consequently, relations between the Gabonese and Nigerian governments were strained until a reconciliation and re-establishment of diplomatic ties in February 1973.

M'ba died in France on November 28, 1967, and two days later, at the age of thirty-two, Bongo assumed the presidency in keeping with a constitutional amendment under which the Vice-President automatically becomes head of state and government on the President's death.

Ever since 1968, when a single-party system of government was announced and the Democratic Party of Gabon (PDG) was formed, the country has been run under the motto "Dialogue-Tolerance-Peace".

Gabon is one of the countries most closely tied to France and interested in the "French-speaking" concept. It is a member of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation, made up of some twenty French-speaking countries, including Canada.

In September 1970, the government decided to extend the limits of its territorial waters in place of the 12-mile limit established under a 1963 law. This decision produced tension in relations with the neighbouring countries, in particular Equatorial Guinea.

In 1971, the government imposed certain restrictions to prevent a possible student revolt. The student association at the University of Libreville was banned and all student groups were dissolved throughout the country.

Meanwhile, a certain critical movement emerged in the PDG against the party's members and officials, who considered themselves untouchable. This movement was a reflection of internal struggles and divisions within the supreme state authority.

1971 saw a re-assertion of Gabon's friendship with and loyalty to France. President Georges Pompidou of France visited Libreville, while Bongo made a private visit to Paris, and both visits further strengthened the bonds of cooperation between the two countries. Gabon also strengthened its ties with Switzerland, Sweden, Italy, Canada, the United States and Japan, and concluded a number of commercial agreements with other European countries.

In March of the same year, President Bongo decided to dissolve two rival national councils of the Gabonese Evangelical Church and ordered some pastors out of the country, two moves which provoked major discontent among the believers and the church.

The state adopted measures favouring small businessmen who have benefited since then from improved banking and commercial facilities.

Also in 1971, one of the principal leaders of the Gabonese opposition, Germain M'ba, who had been amnestied by Bongo before being appointed Ambassador to Bonn, was assassinated under circumstances which have not yet been explained.

Gabon pronounced itself in favour of a direct dialogue with the South African racists and announced the holding in Libreville in 1972 of a conference of African states favouring a dialogue with Pretoria.

On February 22, 1972, Jean Essone, who had been sentenced as the leader of the coup of February 1964, was released from prison. For internal political reasons, Bongo decided to call that year a "Year of Justice and Pardon". On August 18, Jean Hilaire Aubame was released—the opposition leader who was to have assumed the presidency should the military coup of 1964 have prevailed.

In the same year, two cabinet changes took place—on February 3 and on September 30.

The Bongo government decided that as of January 1973, a policy of economic austerity would be pursued in view of the economic crisis which had seized Gabon.

That period saw growing contradictions between Bongo and some foreign companies established in the country because of a shortage of trained Gabonese cadres. These companies were forced to transfer to the Gabonese state 10% of their shares. In September 1973, the West African Society of Maritime Companies turned over to the state 10% of its shares.

The basic problem that year continued to be financing of the construction of the trans-Gabon railway line which would permit the exploitation of important iron ore deposits in the Belinga and Mekambo region in the east of the country. The cost of building the first section of the line from Booue to the port of Owando is estimated at 200 million French francs. It was hoped that the World Bank would provide about 100 million dollars for this project, while Gabon would provide 60 million, France 20 million and the EEC 28 million.

At the beginning of 1973, Gabon militarily occupied the island of Corisco in the Gulf of Guinea, which belongs to neighbouring Equatorial Guinea. The dispute over this territory was subsequently settled with the help of the Presidents of Zaire and the Congo.

The PDG congress held in Libreville from January 18 to 20, 1973, nominated President Bongo as the only candidate for the elections held in that year, and restructured its political organization. The Political Bureau was reduced from 40 to 20 members and a Central Committee of 73 members—chosen by Bongo himself—was established. A new cabinet, similar to the preceeding one, emerged from the elections on March 8, 1973.

On July 30, 1973, the command of the armed forces and the gendarmerie was reorganized under the supreme authority of Bongo. General Nazaire Boulingui, the chief of the chief of the General Staff, was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. Since then, the First Paratroop Company has been under the direct authority of the President, while the air force is under the command of the Chief of the General Staff, Commander Jean Bernard Roux.

The President became a convert to Islam and changed his name of Albert Bernard to Omar. Immediately thereafter he made overtures to the petroleum-producing and other Arab countries, and exchanged official delegations with Libya, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia. Then he also decided that privately-owned enterprises played a social role in the country, including such firms as Elf-Spafe, Comilog and others.

Gabon's contacts with the Arab states intensified in 1974 and Gabon received different financial offers from these states, in particular Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Morocco offered Gabon 28,000,000 dollars for the construction of a section of the trans-Gabon railway.

Gabon's diplomatic offensive followed many directions, including a growing volume of trade with Rhodesia (today's independent Zimbabwe) in spite of the U.N. imposed embargo on trade with that country. The Gabonese Affretair company, which was financed by capital supplied by the Rhodesian racists, was headed by a Rhodesian, David Adams. In Libreville and other places in the country, Rhodesian products were openly on sale and Gabon gained large profits from customs duties imposed on transit of goods between Rhodesia and Western Europe.

A cabinet reorganization in April 1975 was projected into a new structure of the government, which since then has had 26 cabinet ministers and 14 state secretaries.

A second cabinet shake-up took place in October of the same year—less than five months after the first one—in a move tied to the envisaged formation in January 1976 of a new body for marketing timber which is the second most important commodity in Gabon's economy.

In March 1976, Leon Auge was appointed Foreign Minister, and the first conference of provincial governors was held in keeping with the administrative reorganization effected the year before, under which the country was divided into nine provinces. The earlier sub-prefectures became administrative departments, while administrative control posts were turned into sub-prefectures.

In January 1977, Gabon directly participated in an abortive aggression against the People's Republic of Benin, and in June of the same year Libreville played host to the 14th Summit Conference of the Organization of African Unity. On that occasion the Gabon government refused to grant visas to members of the POLISARIO Front delegation in spite of the fact that POLISARIO is recognized by the OAU and that the situation in the Sahara was on the agenda of the conference.

An active participant of the Lome Convention, Gabon is one of the group of former French colonies which want to maintain very close ties with France. As such it also supports to formation of a so-called pan-African intervention force which is being promoted by France and other West European countries.

In April 1978, the government of Sao Tome and Principe accused Gabon of having instigated and financed a military operation by mercenaries against that small island country.

In January 1979, criticism was raised at the Second Special Congress of the PDG against manifestations of tribalism and nepotism, against administrative incompetance, corruption, and demagogy. A month later, Bongo dismissed his Prime Minister, Leon Mebiame.

After the congress, Bongo was again the sole candidate for the presidential elections held in December 1979, in which he was re-elected for another term of seven years. In the legislative elections held in February 1980, all the seats were won by the PDG.

In April 1980, economic and financial difficulties were reported, as well as a growth of social contradictions and an explosion of tribal conflicts.

Economy: The mainstay of Gabon's economy is the extraction of petroleum, which places the country among the continent's five major producers of this commodity. The petroleum industry is controlled by foreign consortiums (ELF-Gabon and Shell-Gabon). Agricultural production has a subsistence character and cattle-raising is extremely underdeveloped.

According to 1975 figures, the country's economically active population was 296,000, but there are no specific data available as to its actual employment.

In 1980, the mining industry produced 10,600,000 tons of petroleum, 56,172,000 cu.m of natural gas, 2,300,000 tons of manganese, 1,511,000 tons of uranium, whose production is also in the hands of foreign corporations, and 40 kg of gold. The output of electric power was 526,000,000,000 kWh. In 1977, Gabon produced 2,487,000 cu.m of timber. Other industries, light and underdeveloped, produce textiles and food, and in 1977 refined two million tons of petroleum.

According to available figures, Gabon's gross national product was 1,930,000,000 dollars in 1978, while the per capita GNP was 3,580 dollars in 1979, the year when the balance of trade showed a surplus of 110,675 million CFA francs (249,849,000,000 francs worth of exports and 139,174,000,000 francs of imports). The 1979 national budget was balanced at 282,421,000,000 CFA francs. In 1978, Gabon's foreign exchange reserves amounted to 2,482 million dollars. According to World Bank data, the country's foreign public debt was 454 million dollars in 1975. The national currency is the CFA franc. In 1975, the cost of living index in Libreville was 58.2 points above the base year of 1970.

Government: Under a constitution amended in February 1967, the executive branch of the government in the Republic of Gabon is headed by a President elected for a term of seven years by popular vote under universal suffrage. Legislative power is vested in a National Assembly of 93 members, (84 elected by popular vote for a term of seven years and 9 appointed by the President of the Republic).

The President is assisted by a cabinet appointed by him. Theoretically, the judiciary operates independently of the executive and legislative branches of government.

Armed forces: In 1979, Gabon's armed forces consisted of a batallion of 1,000 soldiers and an air force of 200 men, a navy of 100 men, as well as a paramilitary force of 1,600 men. A company reinforced by French paratroops is stationed in Gabon for the protection of the President and is directly under his command. There is also a French intervention force of some 300 to 400 soldiers, stationed at a base near Libreville.

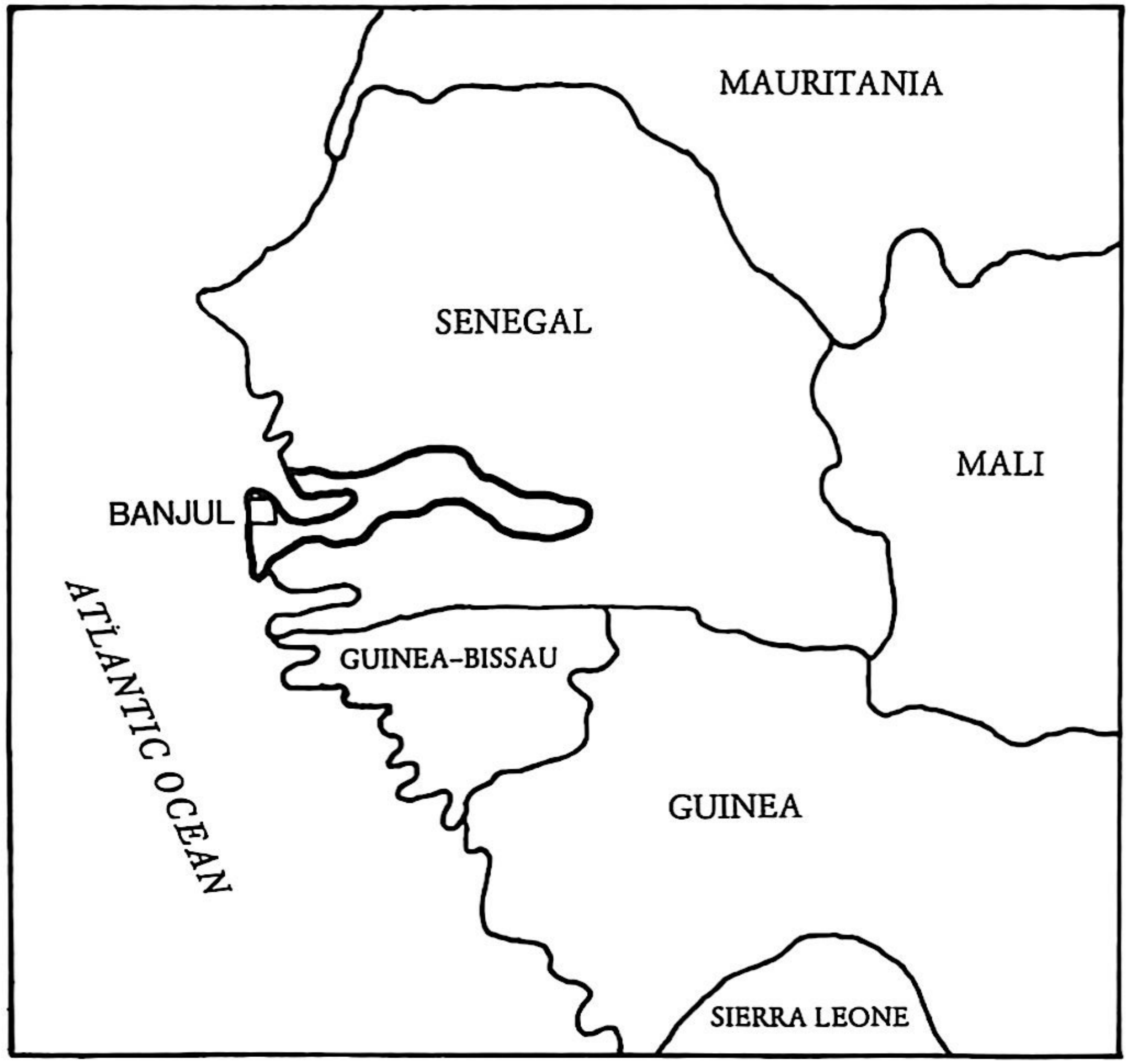
Organizations: The Gabonese Democratic Party has a Political Bureau of 20 members and a Central Committee of 73 members. It was founded by Bongo who is its Secretary General. It is the only political organization in the country.

Education: The education budget for 1974 amounted to 509,400,000 CFA francs. In the 1977-1978 school year there were 140,632 pupils attending primary schools and 26,342 students attended secondary schools. There is one university with an enrollment of 1,284 students.

Public health: In 1980, there was one doctor for every 3,110 inhabitants and one hospital bed for every 133 inhabitants. The doctors are mostly concentrated in the capital.

Religion: There is no official religion, although it is estimated that 60% of the population are Christians (42% Roman Catholics), 40% practice animist cults, and less than one per cent are Moslems.

GAMBIA


MAURITANIA
SENEGAL
MALI
BANJUL
ATLANTIC OCEAN
GUINEA-BISSAU
GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE

Official name: The Gambia.
Area: 11,295 sq.km.
Borders: It is surrounded in the north, the east and the south by Senegal whose territory it intersects. In the west is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 570,000, population density is 139 per sq.km, and the annual rate of population growth was 2.2% in the period 1970-1974. The main ethnic groups are the Mandinga (40%), the Fula (13%), the Wolof (12%), the Jola, and the Saruhele.
Capital: Banjul (42,000 inhabitants—1978 estimate).
Principal cities: Brijama.
Languages: English is the official language. Some African languages are also spoken, such as Malinke, Wolof, and others.
Public holidays: February 18, Independence Day (1965).
Geography: Gambia occupies a narrow strip of land 321 km long on both sides of the river which gave the country its name and which is its main line of communication. It forms an enclave in the territory of Senegal. There are no mountains or other prominent geographical features.

The 740 km long river is navigable along its entire length. The capital of Gambia is built on St. Mary's Island in the river's estuary. The climate is subtropical with a warm rainy season and a cool, dry season.

Brief history: The Portuguese arrived at the estuary of the Gambia River in the 15th century but did not venture into the interior.

The English, who traded along the Gambia River under a concession from the Portuguese, sent an expedition to the area in 1660, which captured the fort of San Andres and subsequently renamed it Ft. James. Thus began the British presence in this zone, which continued for more than three centuries.

Later, rivalry developed in the slave trade (based in Senegambia) and the ivory trade with the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French, but the British emerged victorious from these disputes.

Gambia's true colonial history dates from the period 1888-1889. In 1888, the country became a separate colony of British West Africa. In the preceding decades it had been used as a bargaining chip in negotiations with France on the exchange of the colonial possessions of the two powers. These negotiations eventually failed, and this fact, together with pressure by British merchants with business interests in the Gambia, decided the final fate of this territory. The frontiers between Gambia and the French colony of Senegal were drawn up in 1889, breaking up completely the cultural unity of the region and creating problems for Gambia's viability in all fields.

In the period 1888-1945, Gambia had all the features of a typical British colony. Its colonial administration had its headquarters in Bathurst (today's Banjul), with a Governor at the top, a handful of English officials and an executive and a legislative council. Two thirds of the colony's budget were spent on the salaries and pension benefits paid to the colonial officials. The interior was divided into administrative districts, formally governed by the traditional tribal chieftains, but supervised by British commissioners who travelled from one district to another. Peanuts, which had been the principal export crop long before 1888, retained this position throughout the colonial era.

Nationalism and political parties did not develop until the 1950s. The first three political parties to emerge—the Democratic Party, the Muslim Congress, and the United Party—had their supporters among the Wolof population of the capital. The Protectorate People's Party, founded by the current President, Sir Dawda Jawara, in 1960, was the first political party to appeal to the Mandingas, Gambia's ethnic majority, and to point to the neglect with which the interior of the country was being treated. At that time, all the political parties sought majority representation for Africans in the Governor's two advisory councils.

Elections were held in 1960 to a Chamber of Representatives, established under a new Constitution. Subsequently, London decided to grant the country full internal autonomy, which was put into effect through another constitutional change in October 1963. Two years later, independence was proclaimed and a coalition government took over under the leadership of Jawara and P.S. N'jie, the founder of the United Party.

Jawara's party, renamed the People's Progressive Party, has remained in power since the proclamation of independence. In the course of time, N'Jie's party, which went into opposition, steadily declined, as reflected in 1972 and 1977 elections, which were overwhelmingly won by Jawara. Meanwhile, however, new opposition forces emerged, such as the National Convention Party, which has attracted Mandingas hostile to Jawara, and the National Liberation Party, which has rallied the radical elements in the capital city.

The government has followed a pragmatic foreign policy in the attempt to obtain assistance from Great Britain, the European Economic Community, the United States, the Arab world, the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China among others.

A major factor in Gambia's existence has been its relations with Senegal, in particular a project of closer economic, political and cultural cooperation between the two countries. A treaty of association was signed in 1967, in 1973 Jawara made an official visit to Dakar, and three years later Senegal's President Leopold Sedar Senghor visited Banjul.

At the request of the Gambian authorities, 400 Senegalese soldiers landed in Banjul on October 31, 1980, to help Jawara's government suppress an alleged military coup which was led—according to some sources—by the second-in-command of Gambia's Field Forces, Major Emmanuel Mahoney, who was eventually murdered by his own fellow-conspirators. The next day, Gambia broke off diplomatic relations with Libya and outlawed two recently established opposition parties—the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and the Gambian Socialist Revolutionary Party.

Economy: Out of the total arable area of one million hectares, 200,000 hectares are actually cultivated by 85% of the economically active population. According to FAO figures, Gambia produced in 1978, 100,000 tons of peanuts as Africa's tenth largest producer of this crop, in addition to millet, sorghum, palm oil and other agricultural products in small quantities, which cannot even cover local consumption. As far as livestock consumption is concerend, the 1976 figures showed the existence of 310,000 head of cattle, 95,000 goats and 94,000 sheep.

The country lacks mineral resources and basic industry for processing its agricultural products. In 1977, it produced 31,200,000 kWh of electricity.

According to available data, Gambia's gross national product in the period 1976-1977 was 120 million U.S. dollars, while the national budget for fiscal year 1974 showed a deficit of 200,000 dollars resulting from expenditure of 14,100,000 dollars and an income of 13,900,000 dollars. In 1977, Gambia's international monetary reserves amounted to 24,390,000 dollars, while its balance of trade had a deficit of 154,766,269 dollars. 88% of the country's export income is derived from the sale of peanuts.

The national monetary unit is the new dalasi, which was instituted on March 19, 1973.

The government put into effect an economic development plan in the period 1975-1980 with the objective of promoting agriculture and the infrastructure of the country's interior, and of improving living conditions in general. According to World Bank figures, Gambia's foreign debt stood at 13,200,000 dollars in 1975.

Government: Gambia's system of government is based on a Constitution which was

Official name: The Republic of Ghana.
Area: 238,539 sq. km.
Borders: Ghana borders in the north on Upper Volta, in the east on Togo, in the west on the Ivory Coast, and in the south there is the Gulf of Guinea.
Population: 11,000,000 inhabitants. The annual rate of population growth averaged 3% in the period 1970-1977. The main ethnic groups are the Akan, which with various subgroups form the majority of the population, the Mossidagomba, the Ga-Adangme, and the Ewe. There is also a large group of immigrants from Upper Volta, who constitute approximately 5% of the total population.
Capital: Accra (1,000,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Tema, Cape Coast, Tamale.
Languages: English is the official language. Also spoken are about fifty African languages and dialects.
Public holidays: March 6, Independence Day; July 1, Day of the Republic.
Geography: Ghana's territory is a part of the West African lowlands which border on the Atlantic Ocean. The country has four distinct geographical regions, but more than half of it barely exceeds 150 m in elevation. The coastline is low with extensive sandy beaches and arid regions of extreme dryness, which alternate with areas of abundant vegetation and palm groves. There we find numerous lagoons, many of which are located at the mouths of small streams.

Geological shifts in this area produce occasional earthquakes, which sometimes also affect the capital. Further in the interior are plateaus crossed by rivers and enjoying abundant rainfall which spurs the growth of thick and very humid sub-equatorial forests. South of Kumasi lies Ghana's only natural inland body of water, Lake Bosumtwi. The centre of the country is also covered with a humid, sub-equatorial forest. This is the area of highest elevation, which slopes down to the broad and deep valley of the Volta River.

In the north and the south, as well as partly in the west the terrain rises to form plateaus of between 300 and 600 m in altitude, which in some places form escarpments, the most prominent among them being Kwahu in the south and Gambaga in the north. However, the major elevations are to be found in the Akwapin-Togo range. They are Mt. Afadajate (885 m), Mt. Dejobpop (876 m) and Mt. Torogbani (872 m), all west of the Volta River and close to the Togo frontier. These hills actually form part of the Togo-Atakora range, which runs through the northern part of Benin and Togo. In the extreme southeast of Ghana the land gently rises to a plateau of pre-Cambrian rock some 4,600 million years old. The north of the country is formed by an eroded plain cut by many valleys and also dotted with small hillocks, where the earth is also extremely old geologically. The system of natural drainage is formed mainly by the Volta River with a large artificial lake of the same name, and the rivers Pra, Ankobra, and Tano, as well as by many smaller streams. Ghana's most important ports are Accra, Tema, Takeri (Takoradi), Sekondi and Winneba.

The climate is influenced by a mass of tropical and continental air known as the *hartmattan*, which is hot and dry, and extends all the way south from the Sahara Desert. An oceanic, tropical and much cooler mass of monsoonal air moves in from the Atlantic Ocean. When the two air masses converge, they produce rains. Most of the rainfall comes with the prevalent, strong monsoonal winds, while the dry season occurs when the *hartmattan* blows. In the extreme north of the country the dry season extends from November

In the extreme north of the country the dry season extends from November to March, when it is very hot during the day while the nights are cold, and the rains reach their maximum in August and September. The average annual rainfall is 127 mm, while the median annual temperature varies from 26°C to 29°C.

The hottest months are February and March and the coolest are January and August, mainly along the coast.
Brief history: In the second half of the 15th century, Portuguese merchants reached the coast of today's Ghana and at some points established trading posts mainly for the purposes of obtaining gold. This gave the area its name—the Gold Coast—by which it was known until 1957. Later, trade with ivory and, finally, with slaves brought there Danish, Dutch and English merchants and adventurers, who used African intermediaries for their deals.

In the 1820s, Britain established her control over the Gold Coast and in 1844 forced the Ashanti tribe to sign a treaty abolishing slave trade. In 1874, the colony of the Gold Coast was officially established and bases were thus established for penetration of the interior. The Ashanti Kingdom was annexed in 1901 but only after the protracted resistance of the Ashantis had been broken. Somewhat later, the northern part of the present Republic of Ghana was placed under the "protection" of the British Crown. Following the German defeat in World War I, Western Togoland was annexed and joined to the Gold Coast.

Ghanaian nationalism has a long history, in which the milestones are the abortive project of the Fanti Confederation and the founding of the Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Natives in the last quarter of the past century, and the establishment of the National Congress of British West Africa, founded by the Gold Coast solicitor Casely Hayford in 1920.

In contrast to the other British sub-Saharan colonies, the Gold Coast enjoyed relative prosperity based on the production of cocoa, gold and diamonds. This fact, together with the absence of any marked ethnic differences, promoted the growth of an autonomy-minded sector of the farming and commercial petty-bourgeoisie, which, in turn, forced the institution of a liberal and paternalistic colonial administration tolerating certain trade union and political activities among the native population. In the 1920s it even introduced African representation in the Governor's Legislative Council on the basis of universal suffrage. The existence of cocoa plantations produced a large population growth in the south-central part of the colony, also spurred by an influx of immigrants from Togo, Upper Volta and Nigeria. The population of the south rose from 60% of the total Gold Coast population to 80% in 1960.

The invasion of Ethiopia by fascist Italy (1935-1937) intensified pan-African liberation trends in many of the British colonies, as documented by the successive founding of the African International Friends of Abyssinia, the International African Information Bureau and, in 1944, the Pan-African Federation. Prominence was gained among other progressive individuals by the Ghanaian student Kwame Nkrumah, one of the foremost initiators of the historical Fifth Pan-African Congress held in Manchester in 1945. The well-known Declaration to the Colonial Peoples, adopted by that meeting, was edited by Nkrumah himself, demanding the immediate and unconditional liquidation of the colonial system of imperialism.

Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast in 1947 after a twelve-year absence spent in the United States and Britain. On his return he became Secretary-General of the United Convention Party of the Gold Coast (UCGC), which demanded "autonomy for the colony within the shortest possible time."

Of a moderate trend, this organization actually represented liberal professionals, businessmen and "Europeanized' teachers.

Many strikes and anti-colonial disturbances in 1948, led Nkrumah to forming in 1949 the Convention People's Party (CPP) with a programme of "autonomy now" and a adopted on April 24, 1970, by a popular referendum and which established the existing republican system. That document annulled a law which in 1962 provided for the appointment of a Governor-General representing the British Queen.

The President is the Head of State and the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces. There is a Vice-President who represents the government in the House of Representatives of 35 members elected by universal suffrage. Also sitting in the House of Representatives are four tribal chieftains elected by tribal assemblies, four other appointed members, and the Attorney General and his Assistant. The House is elected for a term of five years.

The judicial system is based on English Common Law and decrees adopted by the House of Representatives, including a law which established a Moslem Court with jurisdiction over certain legal cases involving Moslem citizens of the country.

The Supreme Court is headed by a Chief Justice and a judge of lesser rank. It has a limited jurisdiction and submits petitions to the Court of Appeals. The latter court, established in 1961, is composed of a President and several other judges. There is a Magistrates Court in Kanafing as well as lower, district courts with limited civil and criminal jurisdiction.

The Moslem Court deals exclusively with litigation between Moslems. It is also competent to deal with matrimonial and probate matters, donations and custody. The court applies Islamic law. A cadi and two assessors constitute this Moslem court.

Armed forces: There is a police force of 750 men and a Field Force of 300 men.

Organizations: Gambia's main political organizations are the Progressive People's Party of Gambia, which is the ruling party, the National Convention Party, the United Party, the National Liberation Party and others.

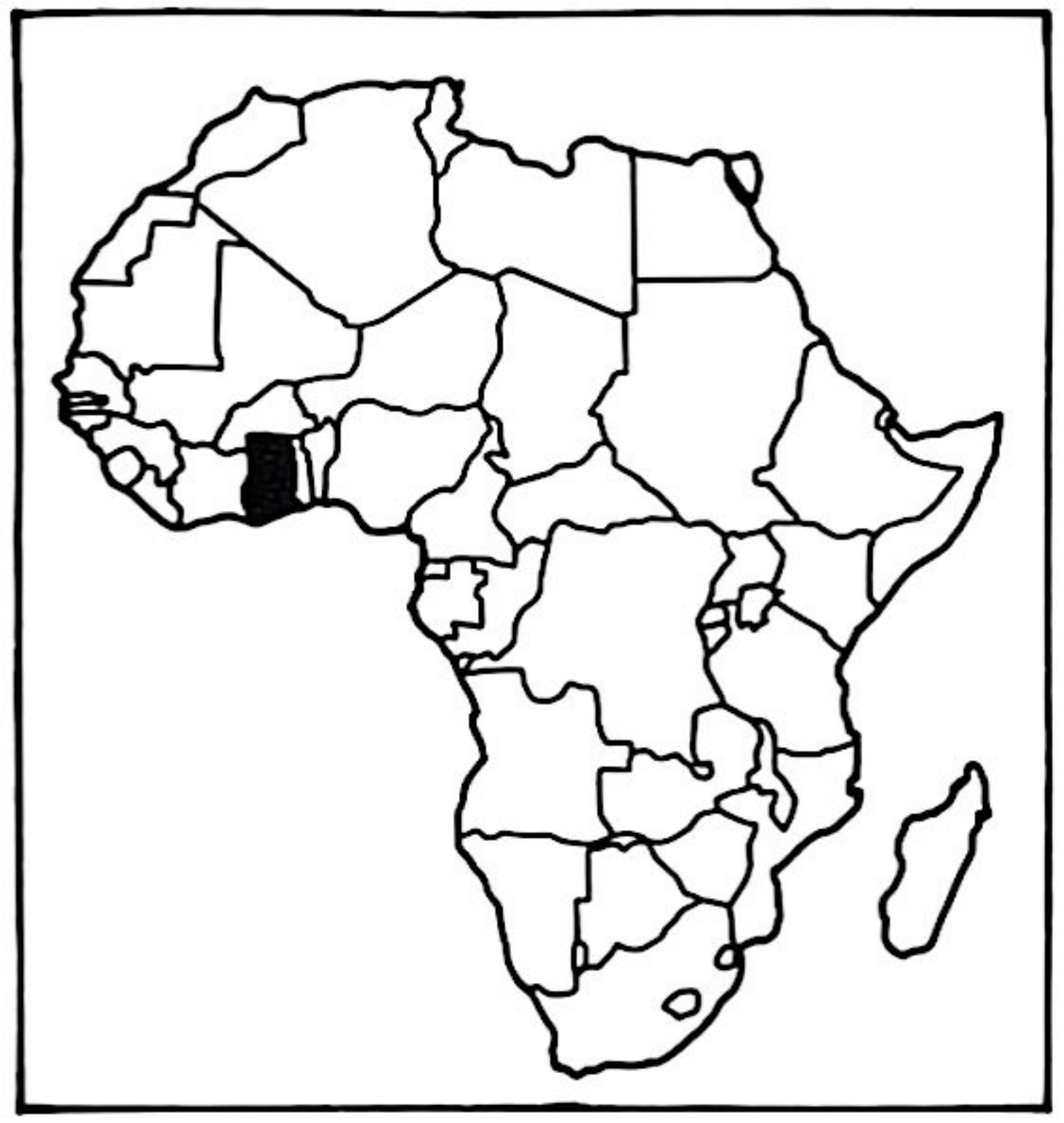
Education: According to 1976-1977 figures, there were 99 elementary schools with 289 teachers and 25,525 pupils, 16 vocational and trade schools with 239 teachers and 4,625 students, 7 secondary schools with 124 teachers and 2,199 students, and 3 superior secondary schools with 37 teachers and 493 students. 90% of the population are illiterate.

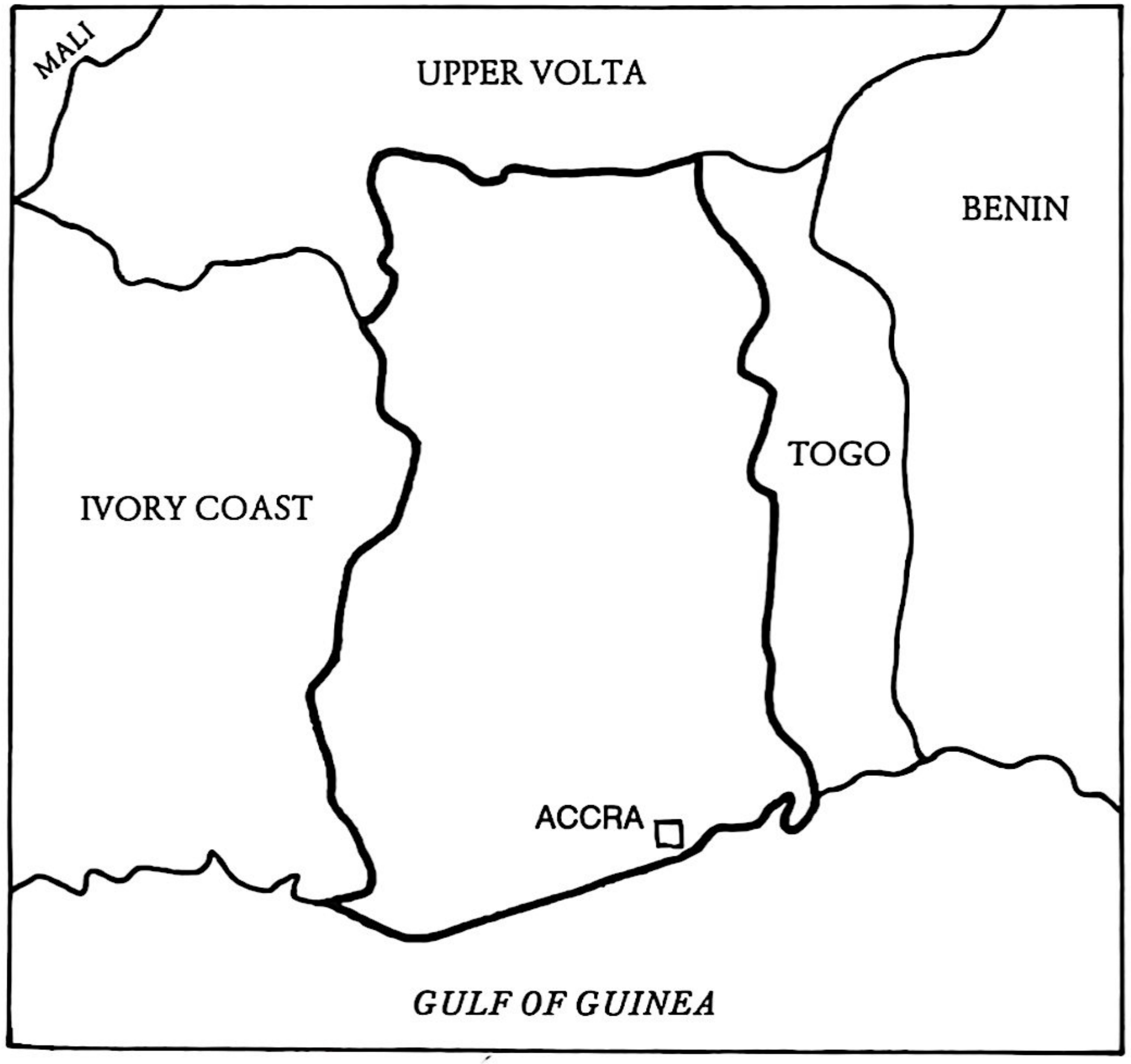
Public health: In 1976, there were five hospitals in the whole country with 488 beds, 19 doctors and one dentist.

Religion: 85% of the population are Moslems, but there persist animist cults among some ethnic groups.

After the close of this book, on November 11 1981, the Senegal's and Gambia's Presidents signed an agreement, according to which these two states form the federal state of Senegambia. The new state has a joint army and security organs, united economy and currency, and a coordinated foreign policy. Joint security units have been existing since Senegal's intervention in Gambia in Summer 1981. Internal organization of the new state is based on autonomy.

GHANA





membership recruited from among the lower strata of the petty-bourgeoisie, the trade unions, the youth, and women engaged in the retail trade. It had a dynamic concept of struggle for independence with some elements of socialist ideology.

Nkrumah's party and the trade unions launched in 1950 a campaign of "positive action"—strikes, boycott, civil disobedience, a nationalist press, etc. Nkrumah was arrested, but the British government was forced to call general elections in 1951, which produced a CPP majority in the Legislative Assembly, while Nkrumah became the head of the first "responsible government" of the Gold Coast.

Between the granting of internal autonomy in 1952 and independence, proclaimed in March 6, 1957, Nkrumah pursued his "tactical action" with the objective of preventing last-minute British manoeuvring to delay independence. For their part, the colonialists tried from 1954 to unify the tribal and conservative opposition of some traditional chiefs, owners of rubber plantations and intellectuals, first under the veteran politician Joseph Danquah and then through the United Party of the reactionary sociologist Kofi Busia. However, in elections held in 1956, the CPP won 72 of the 104 parliamentary seats, and one year later Nkrumah became the Prime Minister of the first independent government.

A convinced pan-Africanist, Nkrumah engaged from the very beginning in feverish activity. In April 1958, he presided in the capital of his country over the first conference of heads of state and government of the then still few indpendent African countries and in December of the same year he sponsored—again in Accra—an All-African People's Conference, perhaps the most important event of its kind ever held on African soil. It was attended by most of the major national liberation movements on the contintent—Algeria's FLN, represented by Frantz Fanon, Congo's MNC under the leadership of Patrice Lumumba, the patriots from the Portuguese colonies, South Africa, the so-called British Central Africa Federation, East Africa and other parts of the African continent. Also attending was a representative of the government of Guinea-Conakry, which had gained its independence from French colonialism in October of that year and with which Ghana established the nucleus of the Union of African Anti-Imperialist Governments. That body was subsequently joined by Gamal Abdel Nasser's Egypt, Modibo Keita's Mali and other countries. All the participants were advocates of a stepped-up struggle against colonialism, racism and neo-colonialism, of a foreign policy of positive neutralism and cooperation with the socialist states, as well as of a non-capitalist way of economic and social development.

Through a public referendum the people of Ghana proclaimed their country a republic and elected Nkrumah its President on July 1, 1960. Beginning especially in 1962, Nkrumah accentuated the socialist orientation of his policy—increased control of foreign trade, establishment of many state-owned and mixed enterprises, construction of a large electro-metallurgical complex on the Volta River, and other projects—although at the same time the country found itself in serious financial trouble with a growing foreign debt and balance of payments deficit.

The rightist opposition stepped up its activity with imperialist aid, including an attempt to assassinate the President. Nkrumah tried to counter that activity by instituting a one-party system, by mobilizing the people (the trade unions, the youth and the women), and by using repressive measures, but never effectively and always striving to maintain in balance the social and political heterogeneity of the CPP. But it was within his very party where elements tied to the military and to the rightist opposition, as well as to imperialism, conspired against the socialist orientation of the Nkrumah regime.

In 1966, when he was on a visit in Peking, Nkrumah was overthrown in a military coup led by Major E. Kotoka with the help of agents of the CIA and Anglo-American imperialism. A Council of National Liberation was formed, which named General Joseph

Ankrah head of state, and he then dissolved the parliament and banned the Convention People's Party. Nkrumah found asylum in Guinea, where he was recognized as the legitimate Ghanaian head of state. He died six years later in Rumania, on April 27, 1972, the victim of a terminal disease.

The military regime was unable to master the economic and political situation in the country. There were strikes of miners and railway workers, and discontent was growing within the armed forces. In the face of the critical situation, Ankrah resigned in 1969, after having admitted that he had received money from large private enterprises for political purposes. In August of the same year, following manipulated elections, Kofi A. Busia was appointed Prime Minister.

The rule of the government of Dr. Busia, the undisputed leader of the Ghanaian bourgeoisie, which lasted from 1969 to 1972, was disastrous. The economic crisis deepened and serious political errors were committed, such as the systematic concession of privileges to the Ashanti group in public administration and the armed forces, which sharpened inter-tribal conflicts. Nepotism and corruption were rampant, tens of thousands of Africans from other countries were expelled, and a policy of "dialogue" with the South African regime was ardently pursued. Already in 1971, a current of opinion favoured Nkrumah's return.

In January 1972, a group of officers under the leadership of Colonel Ignatius Acheampong seized power, but they, too, were unable to solve the acute economic, political and social problems of the country in spite of their effort to win mass support through a partial rehabilitation of "Nkrumahism". By 1975, urban unemployment had reach the figure of 500,000, that is one-third of the economically active urban population. An official project called "Feed yourself" was a failure and many areas suffered from hunger in the years 1975-1978. Bourgeois opposition, working through the 1,000 members of the Ghanaian Bar Association, began to call for a return to civilian government in 1977, while the trade unions tried to maintain their independence of the bourgeoisie and the military. The latter promised a return to civilian rule by July 1979.

In March 1978, only 55% of the electorate rejected the functioning of political parties. In May, the National Redemption Council announced the formation of a Constitutional Committee which would draw up a new constitution for the country. On July 5, General Ignatius Acheampong resigned as head of state and was replaced by General Frederick Akuffo, until then the Army Chief-of-Staff. No reason for the change was given. The new head of state confirmed that he would surrender the government to civilians on July 1, 1979, after general elections had been held.

On June 4, 1979, following a coup, a group of young, lower-rank officers, led by Captain Jerry Rawlings, seized power and declared themselves in favour of early elections which would place power in the country in civilian hands and would ensure democratization of political life.

The military group led by Rawlings, who had ordered the execution of Acheampong, Akuffo and Afrifa—the latter a leading putschist from the coup of February 24, 1966—speeded up the electoral process in the course of June and July. The elections were won by the People's National Party which had been founded shortly before by moderates from Nkrumah's old CPP, and their candidate, Hilla Limann, assumed the presidency on September 24, 1979. Thus began a period called by many "The Third Republic". Without past political experience and only forty years of age, Limann forced in November the retirement of Rawlings, who since then has refused to accept any public office, sharply criticizing the government, and is the guiding spirit of an unofficial group calling itself the June 4th Movement.

At the beginning of 1980, the new President convened his cabinet in Peduase Lodge, his official residence, for a two-day seminar, at which he exhorted them to "renounce all personal and party interests" and to be responsive and open to the aspirations of the people. He warned them against adopting arbitrary decisions against the people and alerted them to the necessity of keeping themselves informed of all the currents of public opinion in the country in order to restore the people's confidence in their institutions.

Limann re-asserted that his government would continue maintaining relations with all countries and that it would maintain a climate of social and political stability with conditions for economic progress.

On March 29, 1980, the discovery was announced of an attempted coup, led by Air Force Sergeant Major Ebenezer Odoi from Rawlings' original group. Another attempted putsch was discovered on May 12. On April 25, the Ghanaian President strongly attacked what he called some elements in the army, unadjusted terrorists and irresponsible and ambitious citizens.

According to Western sources, the ruling PNP party is internally divided between a Nkrumahist "Old Guard", headed by the leader of the party, Imoru Egale, who had been Nkrumah's Minister of Industry, a right wing led by the millionaire Chief Okoutwer Bekoe, and a left wing made up of intellectuals and trade union leaders.

On the first anniversary of Limann's assumption of office, on September 24, 1980, four opposition groups sharply attacked the government from ideologically divergent positions, accusing it of "immobility". They were the United National Convention, the Action Congress Party, the Social Democratic Front, and the Kwame Nkrumah Revolutionary Guard, led by an old member of the Nkrumahist left, Kodwo Addison, who accused the PNP of demagogically usurping the name of the late founder of Ghana.

In addition, the United National Convention group, led by Victor Owusu, which holds 42 seats in the parliament, broke away from the PNP whose parliamentary majority was thus reduced to 71 of the total 140 seats.

Economy: According to data published by the World Bank for 1977, agriculture accounted for 39% of Ghana's gross national product, industry for 22%, and services for 39%. In the same year, 54% of the labour force was employed in agriculture, 19% in industry and 27% in services. Half of the population is of productive age. The main agricultural products are cocoa (279,000 tons in 1979-1980), which brings in 60% of the export income and of which Ghana had been the world's foremost producer in 1963 with 500,000 tons, maize, millet, sorghum, tomatoes, copra and peanuts. The livestock census in 1974 showed 1,100,000 head of cattle, 1,600,000 sheep, 1,600,000 goats, 340,000 pigs and 10,000,000 poultry.

Gold deposits were discovered in 1981 which could turn Ghana into one of the world's main producers of this precious metal. It is also an important producer of diamonds, manganese and bauxite. Ghana's industry is basically light in character. The country possesses a large hydroelectric capacity with its Akosombo Dam on the Volta River, and exports electricity to Togo and Upper Volta.

In 1976, Ghana's exports were made up 11% of minerals and metals, 88% of other primary commodities (principally cocoa), and 1% of other manufactured goods. In 1977, 76% of Ghana's exports went to the advanced capitalist countries, 12% to the developing countries, and 12% to the socialist countries. In the same year, the value of Ghanaian exports was 1,300,000,000 dollars, while imports were worth 1,100,000,000 dollars. The 1977 GNP amounted to 3,940,000,000 dollars at world market prices. In 1980, Ghana's foreign debt was calculated at 1,300,000,000 dollars, while its budgetary deficit amounted to 633,700.000 dollars. The country had foreign-exchange reserves worth 200,000,000

dollars. The inflation rate in 1980 was the highest in West Africa with 58%. The national currency is the cedi; in the past three years it has lost 300% of its real value. According to official statistics for 1980, 60% of the government expenditures—some 396,000,000 dollars—were spent on wages and salaries of 292,000 civil servants, whose number is 22 times greater than that of the armed forces. 30,000 official cars cost annually some 108,000,000 dollars to operate, while only 53,000,000 dollars were allocated in the same year for agricultural projects. In a country which is 80% agricultural in character, only 5% of the area under cultivation is used for producing food.

Government: Executive power in the Republic of Ghana is held by the President, a Vice-President and the Cabinet, while legislative power is vested in the National Assembly of 140 members elected by popular vote under universal suffrage. Judicial power has retained its original, pre-putsch, model with a Supreme Court presided over by a Chief Justice at the top of a hierarchy of lower courts based on the political and administrative division of the country into regions and districts.

Armed forces: The regular forces vary from 15,000 to 17,000 men,who are assisted by a militia of 3,000 men.

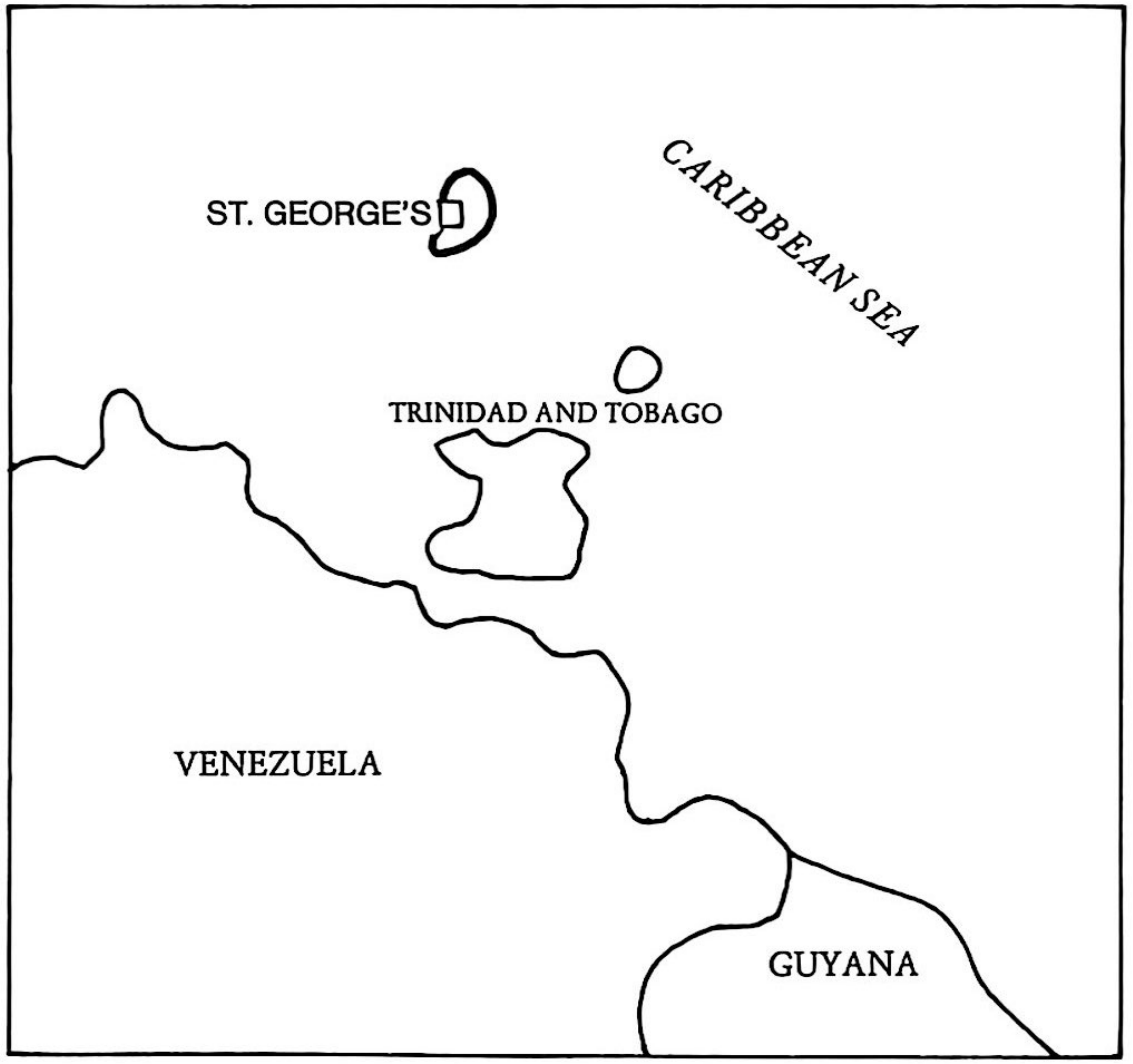
Political parties: The main political parties, which emerged at the close of the Acheampong-Akuffo period of military rule, are the ruling People's National Party, the United National Convention, which is the principal opposition party, the Action Congress Party, the Social Democratic Front, and some minor groups which are not legalized.

Education: According to 1976 figures, 44% of school-age children attended primary schools and 50% attended secondary schools. Ghana's three universities had an enrolment of approximately 10,000 students in 1980. 25% of the national budget is spent on education. In 1975, 70% of the adult population were illiterate.

Public health: In 1976, there was one doctor in the country for every 10,200 inhabitants. 35% of the population has access to drinking water (1975). It is estimated that there is a hospital bed for every 695 inhabitants. However, 23% of the hospital capacity is located in the capital for 10% of the total population of the country.

Religion: According to 1979 figures, 45% of the population of Ghana practised animist cults, 43% were Christians and 12% were Moslems.

GRENADA


ST. GEORGE'S
CARIBBEAN SEA
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
VENEZUELA
GUYANA

Official name: Grenada.

Area: 344 sq.km.

Borders: The three islands which form the country—Grenada, Carriacou and Petit Martinique—lie in the Caribbean Sea 90 miles north of Trinidad and 68 miles southeast of St. Vincent.

Population: Grenada has roughly 120,000 inhabitants, 90% being of African origin. Other major groups are Mestizos, East Indians and whites. In 1978, the density of the population was 334 inhabitants per sq.km.

Capital: St. George's (30,000 inhabitants).

Principal cities: Grenada is administratively divided into seven "parishes" or districts: Saint George, Saint John, Saint Mark, Saint David, Saint Andrew and Saint Patrick, and the island of Carriacou. Of these parishes, St. Andrew on Grenada's eastern coast is the largest and most populous, and is also the major producer of bananas. The village of Gouyave on the west coast is the most important fishing centre. There are also the townships of Greenville, Victoria and Sauteurs. The capital, Saint George, is situated in the southwestern and most highly developed part of the island. It is the country's economic, commercial, educational and cultural centre, and contains the major tourist attractions and hotels, including the famous beach Grande Anse.

Languages: English is the official language, but in some localities the French "patois" is still spoken.

Public holidays: February 7, Indpendence Day (1974), and March 13, Launching of the Grenadan Revolution (1979).

Geography: The State of Grenada, the southernmost of the Windward Islands, also includes the two southernmost islands of the Grenadines—Carriacou and Petit Martinique.

Grenada, which is oval in shape, is of volcanic origin.

The north coast has beaches with limestone sand and in the south there are many coves and natural harbours. A mountain range stretches from the north to the south, reaching its highest point at Mt. Saint Catherine, 840 m above sea level. Almost in the centre of the island, at a high altitude, lies Lake Grand Etang in the crater of an extinct volcano. There are many small streams on the island.

The climate is tropical with the median temperature of 28° Centigrade, which varies according to altitude. The year has two seasons—a dry one from January to May, and a humid one from July to November. As other islands in the eastern part of the Caribbean Sea, Grenada lies in the path of hurricanes.

Brief history: As historians agree, the earliest inhabitants of the island arrived from Trinidad or Venezuela—first the Arawaks and then the Caribs,who killed large numbers of the former. Spotted by Columbus on August 15, 1498, it was originally named Concepcion by the great navigator. In 1608, a group of British traders tried to establish a colony on the island, but were attacked and driven out by the Caribs. In 1638, a group of Frenchmen again tried to settle on the island, but also failed in their attempt, until Governor Du Parquet negotiated with the natives in 1650 the establishment of a French colony. However, within a year the hostilities between the new settlers and the Caribs broke out once again. This time, the Caribs were pushed further and further to the north by the colonists. In 1652, after having resisted for a long time, a group of Caribs who had survived the French onslaught decided to throw themselves from a high cliff into the sea rather than become prisoners. Today, the place where this happened is a port known as Sauteurs to honour the courageous Caribs. The French, now firmly entrenched on the island, began to bring in African slaves for work,mostly on sugar cane and indigo plantations.

In 1700, the island's population consisted of 257 white landowners, employees, soldiers and priests, and 525 black slaves.

In 1763, the British seized the island and under the Treaty of Paris placed it under their rule. The French recovered it sixteen years later, in 1779, only to lose it once again to the British in 1783 under the Treaty of Versailles. However, European rivalry in the Caribbean continued. The situation there was deeply influenced by the French Revolution of 1789, as well as by the example of the struggle waged in the very heart of the Caribbean, in Haiti, by Toussaint Louverture.

The black slaves and freemen on Grenada engaged in one of the major uprisings against the British Crown in 1795-1796 under the leadership of Julien Fedon, a mulatto, who carried out hit-and-run attacks against the colonial authorities for several years. The repression was brutal and the insurgent leaders who did not fall in the battle were publicly hanged. Some of them followed the example of the Caribs and threw themselves into the sea rather than submit to the oppressors.

Slavery was abolished in this British colony in 1837, a move which created a shortage of labour on the island. The colonial authorities then encouraged immigration by East Indians.

World War I caused great economic depression on the island. Volunteers from Grenada fought in both world wars. The economic conditions prevailing on the island led local workers to form their first trade union—the Grenada Workers Union—in 1946. In 1950, it merged with another union to form the Grenada Trade Union Council, which for the first time raised the demand for higher wages. In the same year, Eric Gairy, who was later to become Grenada's Prime Minister, founded the Grenada Manual and Mental Workers Union. Two years later, Gairy formed the Grenada United Labour Party (GULP), and in 1953 the Grenada National Party (GNP) was established by middle-class elements.

Still under British colonial rule, Grenada was incorporated into the West Indies Federation together with other Caribbean islands. It remained there until the Federation fell apart in 1962.

In 1967, under a new Constitution, patterned on the constitutions of most of the English-speaking Caribbean islands, Grenada became an Associated State of Great Britain with local government and "internal autonomy", while the Crown retained its control of defence and foreign relations.

In those years, Gairy built up his trade union and his party so as to gain power in the island's government, and in 1961 became its Principal Minister. Following a period of changes in the colonial structure, Gairy won the 1967 elections and later retained his position of power in the disputable elections of 1972. After negotiations held in London, the British government granted Grenada formal independence as of February 7, 1974.

Early in the 1970s, following university studies abroad, Maurice Bishop, Unison Whiteman and other young men returned to the island and formed grassroots organizations opposing not only the colonial regime, but also the repressive practices and the corruption, which were typical of the Gairy administration.

Bishop formed the Movement of Assemblies of the People (MAP), while Whiteman founded the JEWEL movement, an acronym for Joint Endeavour for Welfare, Education and Liberation. These two organizations thus became the initial bases of political opposition to the existing regime.

The political situation was very tense in Grenada in the period preceding independence. There were extended strikes against Gairy and a heterogenous Committee of Twenty-Two, made up of diverse opposition groups, called for Gairy's resignation prior to the proclamation of independence. At the same time it urged the disbandment of all his instruments of repression, as well as the dismissal of the Governor, Hilda Bynoe. On this last point the demands were met.

This committee brought together the Grenada National Party and the New JEWEL Movement, which was founded in 1973, following the unification of the organizations led by Bishop and Whiteman, both of whom became Coordinating Secretaries. The two organizations accused Gairy of actually seeking,under the guise of national independence, dictatorial powers, relying for this purpose on a Special Police corps. In that period, the tourist industry was almost paralyzed due to the reports on the situation on the island.

Clashes occurred in which a number of people were killed and wounded. Maurice Bishop was detained and had to witness the independence celebrations from the Fort George prison.

In January 1974, the Committee of Twenty-Two demanded the resignation of the government and threatened a general strike after having mobilized the workers for this purpose. The majority of Grenada's workers took part in the strike,which lasted for three weeks and was paralleled by massive demonstrations against Gairy.

Gairy ordered his military apparatus to break up the demonstrations with the result that many protesters were killed and wounded. Bishop's father was murdered in public by the police.

The New JEWEL Movement (NJM) took part in various political activities, including electoral activities, and in 1976 formed an alliance with two other opposition parties—the GNP and the United People's Party—which became known as the People's Alliance. Although Gairy's GULP won the 1976 elections by fraudulent means, six representatives of the Alliance, including Bishop, were elected to the parliament.

The popular forces considered the election results as a victory because they had won 48% of the direct vote, even though,due to fraudulent practices,they took only six of the 15 seats in the legislative body.

Besides the parliamentary struggle, the opposition against the Gairy regime continued to grow because of the government's anti-popular policy of using an expanding repressive apparatus, and because of its close ties with such regimes as Pinochet's junta in Chile.

In the last six years preceding the fall of Gairy in 1979, scores of young people were persecuted, tortured and murdered. The NJM initiatied and led many protest acts, and many of Grenada's martyrs came from its ranks. Its leaders, including Bishop and today's members of the Revolutionary People's Government, were imprisoned and tortured.

On March 13, 1979, when Gairy had ordered the assassination of the NJM leaders, the latter decided to seize power and attacked the bastion of the dictatorship, the True Blue Barracks. In a great popular uprising the revolutionary forces also seized Grenada's only radio station and called the people into the streets to consolidate the victory. Gairy's collaborators were detained, but he himself had fled to the United States the day before.

After the formation of the People's Revolutionary Government (PRG) and the consolidation of the Grenadan revolution, Bishop assumed the office of Prime Minister, suspended the constitution, and presented to the country a bold programme drawn up by his government, whose outlines were already known to the people and which included a number of measures benefiting the public.

The first social and economic measures put into effect included a price freeze, foreign-exchange control, institution of a minimum wage, and equal wages for women. The commercial organizations created by Gairy were abolished and an in-depth investigation of the country's finances and of the corruption of the overthrown regime was ordered. Free and democratic trade union activities were permitted, and great efforts were made towards national reconstruction.

From the very beginning, the Grenadan revolution became the target of hostile acts by

the United States and its allies in the Caribbean area, who launched press campaigns and other forms of sabotage of the young nation. Terrorism and other methods of destabilization were also employed against Grenada, including a bomb attack against Prime Minister Bishop and other leaders, which caused the death of three innocent youths during a public rally.

The PRG has adopted an active, independent, non-aligned, anti-imperialist, anti-colonialist, anti-fascist and anti-racist foreign policy. Grenada has also expressed its solidarity with the struggle of the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean for their national liberation, and has established friendly ties with Cuba and Nicaragua as well as with other progressive and socialist countries.

Grenada took part as a full member in the Sixth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which was held in Havana, Cuba, in 1979.

Economy: The PRG inherited a country which was economically in ruins, and rapidly drew up an economic strategy of reconstruction and national development. Bernard Coard, the Minister of Finance, Commerce, Industry and Planning, succeeded in scoring rapid progress in a few months after the victory of March 1979, as has been recognized by all the international economic organizations. Coard's economic strategy identified the existing high rate of unemployment as one of the country's main economic problems which affected especially the youth and the women. Grenada decided to diversify its economy both as regards the range of its export products and the range of countries or markets with which it trades. It is similarly trying to diversify its imports. At the same time, the government keeps a tight control of the financial resources which are to be applied to development projects. These projects are closely dependent on the country's educational and technological progress. The government's plan strives for a reduction of unemployment,which affects almost half of Grenada's labour force.

Together with projects designed to develop hydro-electric and other resources, Grenada's economic programme also envisages the receipt of the maximum possible international financial and technical assistance, although such assistance is being viewed as supplementary to national production.

Grenada's most important economic sectors are agriculture and the tourist industry, as well as an incipient fishing industry. The public sector will be strengthened in the lucrative industries and formation of cooperatives will be encouraged.

Although it had inherited high unemployment, some 40% of agricultural land unexploited, and financial resources which had been denied to national development, the PRG has already succeeded in greatly reducing inflation and living costs by introducing such social measures as free education and medical care, as well as by establishing effective control of the prices of basic products.

All the government's efforts are directed at spurring production and productivity.

Agriculture accounts for 34% of the gross national product and employs some 30% of the labour force, mainly in the production of such export commodities as nutmeg, cocoa and bananas, which make up 90% of Grenada's exports.

The tourist industry, which is the country's second major source of foreign exchange, has recorded a new upsurge since 1974 with visits to Grenada of tourists from the Caribbean area as well as from Europe, the United States and Canada. It envisages the development of a strong infrastructure which would still further encourage tourism. At the beginning of 1980, construction began of a large international airport near the capital, while the Pearls airfield in the northeast of the island will continue to be used until its completion.

Government: Formally, Grenada is a constitutional monarchy within the framework of the British Commonwealth, where the Crown is represented by a Governor-General. The head of the government is Prime Minister Maurice Bishop who presides over a 21-member People's Assembly.which was created by the PRG.

Armed forces: Grenada has a People's Revolutionary Army whose nucleus is formed by the group which attacked the True Blue Barracks on March 13, 1979. The Cabinet Minister in charge of the armed forces is Col. Hudson Austin, leader of the New Jewel Movement. There is also a police force and the recently formed People's Militia. The military victory over the Gairy regime resulted in the break-up of the extensive repressive apparatus built by the overthrown dictatorship, including the army, some of whose officers had been trained in Chile by the Pinochet junta. In addition to different police bodies, Gairy formed a fearsome band of thugs known as "Mongooses", whose job was to torture and murder opponents of the regime.

Organizations: The New Jewel Movement, as already noted, came into being in 1973 by the merger of JEWEL and the MPA, and was led jointly by Maurice Bishop and Unison Whiteman. After having fought many years against the Gairy regime and its United Labour Party of Grenada, the New Jewel Movement assumed power in 1979. Until the Grenadan revolution, the government was in the hands of the United Labour Party, which had fraudulently won all the elections since 1951, with the exception of 1957, when a coalition government was formed. The United Labour Party government was notorious for its anti-popular, repressive policy at home, as well as for the corruption prevalent in its administration.

The Grenadan revolution has given impulse to the formation and development of many organizations of women, the youth and other citizens, and has strengthened the trade unions.

Culture, education and sports: Grenada's cultural manifestations, as those of a country with historical traditions similar to those of the other Caribbean islands, reflect the past presence of the British and French colonizers, as well as African elements, all of which have shaped the island's Caribbean culture.

Although this forceful national culture could never have been destroyed, it did suffer under the asphyxiating colonial and neo-colonial rule.

After the revolutionary victory of 1979, the doors were fully opened for the development of cultural expression under the personal auspices of the Prime Minister. Music, just as the other Grenadan cultural manifestations, is similar to that found on the other islands of the Eastern Caribbean, such as Jamaica or Trinidad. with its well-known tropical rhythm. In this field, Grenada has taken an active part in the three CARIFESTA regional festivals held in Guyana, Jamaica and Cuba.

Education is free for all pupils five to seventeen years old and is obligatory up to the age of fifteen. There are 62 primary and 20 secondary schools in the country, as well as a branch of the Extramural Department of the University of the West Indies.

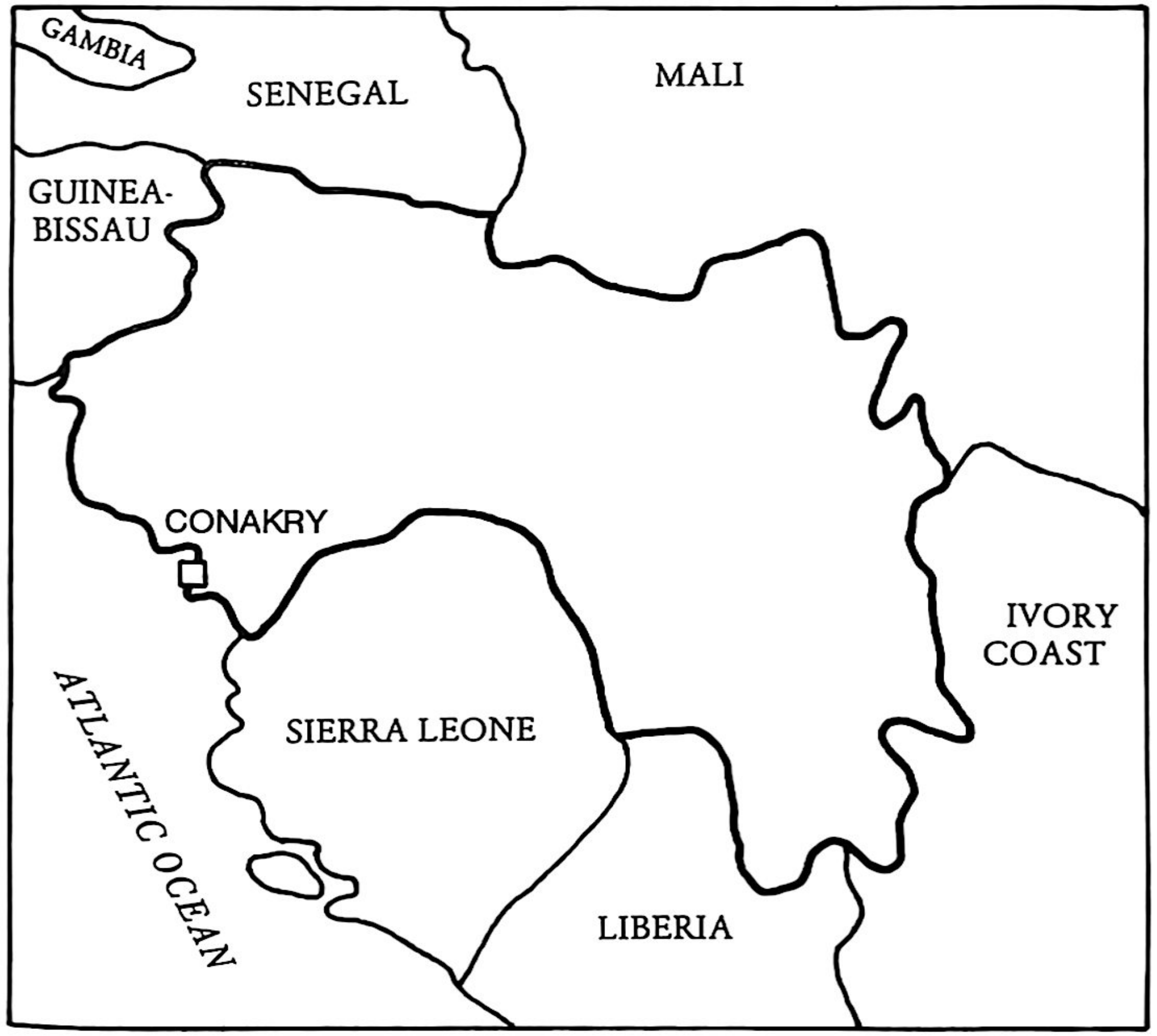
The PRG, when it took power in 1979, found the schools in a dismal state, some not having been repaired for thirty years. The Minister of Education, George Lousion, defined his educational strategy as being closely tied to national production and the liberation of the country. The main objectives of the PRG include the development of broadly based education which is in harmony with the interests of the people; this calls for a complete restructuring of the old colonial and neo-colonial educational system.

The major sport in Grenada, and on the other English-speaking islands, is cricket,which is as popular as football. There is also a growing access to many aquatic sports and to tennis.

Public health: There is a general hospital with 240 beds in the Grenadan capital and several smaller hospitals in the interior and on the island of Carriacou. Under the Gairy regime, the state of public health was disastrous with one doctor for approximately 4,000 inhabitants. At present, the government is putting into effect—with the assistance of Cuban doctors working alongside their Grenadan colleagues—a national plan of free medical care.

Religion: There is complete religious freedom in the country, whose people have been traditionally believers; they are mostly Roman Catholics (60%), followed in numbers by Anglicans, Methodists and other denominations.

GUINEA


GAMBIA
SENEGAL
MALI
GUINEA-BISSAU
CONAKRY
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SIERRA LEONE
IVORY COAST
LIBERIA

Official name: The People's and Revolutionary Republic of Guinea.
Area: 245,957 sq.km.
Borders: In the north it borders on Senegal and Guinea-Bissau, in the southwest on Sierra Leone and Liberia, in the northeast on Mali, in the east on the Ivory Coast, and in the west is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 4,887,000 inhabitants in 1979. The main ethnic groups are the Fullah, the Malinke and the Susu. The average annual rate of population growth in the period 1965-1974 was 2.8%.
Capital: Conakry.
Principal cities: Kankan, Kindia and Labe.
Languages: French is the official language. Also spoken are the Susu, Malinke and Fullah languages.
Public holidays: October 2, Independence Day (1958).
Geography: Guinea's territory has four distinct natural regions which coincide with the continent's best agricultural areas. Lower Guinea consists of a 70 to 90 km wide coastal plain with extremely fertile soil, many estuaries, mangroves, rice fields and pastures. There is fishing, and maize, vegetables, tubers, pineapples, coconuts and sugar cane are grown. Central Guinea, with its Fouta Djalon massif, grows not only agricultural crops, but also raises livestock. Upper Guinea is covered with pastures and shrub, as well as with small woods. There, tobacco, cotton, coffee, peanuts and citrus fruit are grown for home processing and for export. The mountainous forest region—Mt. Nimba rises to more than 1,800 m—is densely populated and is suited for the cultivation of coffee, oil palms, tobacco, quinine, cocoa and rubber trees.

The climate is tropical in Lower Guinea, with great humidity and constantly high temperature. During the dry season the minimum temperature is 17° Centigrade and during the rainy season 30° Centigrade. The mean annual rainfall is 2,000 mm. In the Fouta Djalon range the temperature is more moderate.

Brief history: Guinea has a rich ethnic and cultural legacy. Its name is probably derived from the ancient kingdom of Yenne, whose centre lay at the source of the Niger River in the 13th century.

During the period of the slave trade in the 15th century, Rios del Sur, as this western part of Africa was then known, was used for repair and provisioning of the Spanish and Portuguese ships which sailed to Africa to pick up slaves whom they then carried to the slave markets in America. The western coast of Africa on the Gulf of Guinea had gained such an importance that slave-trading offices were established there, and this, in turn, produced rivalry between the English, French, Italians, Belgians and the Portugese for domination of the territory.

At the beginning of the 18th century, some Peule tribes, coming from the north, settled down in a large part of Guinea and established a feudal state of nine provinces with Islam as its religion. Islam then began to spread to the coastal areas as the Peules settled along the Gulf of Guinea.

In the struggle between the colonial powers for domination of the continent, France won a part of West Africa. French colonialism began to take roots in the area in the second half of that century. In 1881 France had already established a protecorate over Fouta Djalon, but her penetration into the interior of the country ran into fierce opposition by some of the Fulani and Malinke tribes.

Two tribal chiefs distinguished themselves in fighting against French domination—Almamy Samory Toure and Alpha Yaya. Samory united several tribal kingdoms and formed an organized state covering the greater part of the plateau inhabited by the Mandingas. He fought the colonialists for 18 years in spite of the superior French arms, but was eventually captured and deported to Gabon where he died in 1900. With Samory's capture and deportation the native resistance was greatly weakened.

After the colony of French Guinea had been formed in 1895, it was joined in 1904 with Mauritania, Senegal, Sudan, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey and Niger in French West Africa, which was administered by a French governor subordinated to the Ministry for the Colonies in Paris.

As other French colonial possessions, Guinea was given in 1946 the status of an overseas territory. One year earlier, the first trade union was organized in Guinea, led by Ahmed Sekou Toure. That Union of Postal and Telecommunications Workers formed an important nucleus around which subsequently rallied those elements of the population which demanded national independence. This growing national awareness led to the establishment of the African Democratic Union Party (RDA), which held its first congress in Bamako, Mali, in 1946. The congress decided to form a section of the RDA in every French overseas territory for the purpose of fighting against the colonial regime.

On May 17, 1947, the Guinean Democratic Party (PDG) held its constituent congress. As a section of the RDA, it was made up of different patriotic movements and associations.

In May 1957, after the liberation war had begun in Algeria and after Morocco and Tunisia, the two French ex-colonies, had proclaimed their independence, a *loi cadre*—Framework Law—was enacted in Paris. This pseudo-reform conceded certain autonomy to the "overseas territories" by setting up government councils made up of Frenchmen and natives who were also granted representation in the French National Assembly. Sekou Toure was elected to represent Guinea in that Assembly. However, these reforms failed to satisfy the political aspirations of the colonies and therefore a new French constitution expanded the existing concessions. The name "French Union" was replaced by "French Community", but foreign policy, defence matters, the monetary system, economic and financial policy, and in some cases also control of the judiciary, education, transport and communications remained under the competence of the colonial power.

In 1957, the PDG won 58 of the 60 seats in the Territorial Assembly. The first Government Council was formed under the presidency of the French governor. The ministers were native and Sekou Toure held the office of Vice-President.

In 1958, the PDG held its third and fourth congresses, which prepared the conditions for the final liquidation of the colonial system. The General Confederation of Guinean Workers was constituted in the same year, and the Guinean youth movements were unified.

In September 1958, the constitution of the Fifth French Republic was submitted by General Charles de Gaulle to a popular referendum. It provided for the admission of the former colonies into the French Community. The PDG called on the population to cast a negative vote in that referendum. The results were overwhelming with 1,136,000 voters opposing Guinea's membership in the Community and only 56,901 voters favouring it. In other words, 95% of the Guinean electorate voted for absolute and immediate independence of their country. The Republic of Guinea was proclaimed on October 2, 1958.

In September 1959, the PDG held its Fifth Congress. Under the leadership of the PDG, Guinea was affected by the withdrawal of French technical experts and by suspension of trade with France, as parts of a plan of economic blockade and general hostility by the Western powers against the newly emerged state. For its part, the government accelerated the implementation of its national policy of independent development with a socialist trend.

Shortly after having proclaimed its independence, Guinea launched a Three-Year Plan

(1960-1963) which brought about a decisive change in its economy from its colonial dependence on France to an independent and planned national development.

The next stage (1964-1971) began with a Seven-Year Plan whose main objective was to spur economic development through state control of foreign trade, the establishment of a state bank, the introduction of a national currency, the setting up of an insurance company, the nationalization of large transport companies, and the formation of other financial, administrative and commercial institutions.

In the year of Guinea's independence, following the first elections in the history of the young republic, the Sekou Toure government ordered the nationalization of the French-owned power plants and water-supply systems. Nevertheless, French private interests continued to operate in the country, especially in the mining industry, supplemented by British, American and West German interests; these interests did not remain inactive in the face of growing Guinean nationalism. In November 1965, the Guinean government accused France and the other NATO countries of plotting against the Guinean revolution. This produced a break-off of relations between Guinea and France and the arrest of a number of French citizens on charges of conspiring against the Guinean government. The NATO powers also tried to use different forms of internal subversion to overthrow the President and organized a powerful fifth column among politicians and the military, which, however, was broken up after the abortive mercenary invasion against the Republic of Guinea on November 22, 1970.

It took less than 96 hours to defeat the mercenaries—more than 500 African ex-patriots and Portuguese in the pay of Portugal and NATO. Many of them were captured and other fled in the boats that had brought them to the Guinean coast.

Later, a United Nations team confirmed that the invasion constituted an act of aggression by Portugal. The Portuguese allies inside Guinea were members of the bourgeoisie, who had been affected by the revolutionary process within the country. The aggression was inspired by NATO and financed especially by other members of that military pact.

Although those who did not want the imperialist powers to be implicated in that operation claimed that the invasion had been launched from Portugal, it was known that that country had merely played a puppet role for NATO. This fact was asserted by President Sekou Toure when he declared that "the participation of the United States in this matter is substantial" and moreover revealed that France, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, Israel and South Africa had provided "significant military assistance to Portugal to enable the latter to continue waging its colonial war."

It should be remembered that the United States and its NATO allies are major importers of bauxite—the primary source of aluminium which is essential for the aviation industry—and that Guinea has large deposits of iron ore and bauxite.

For her part, France had been in a state of permanent conflict with Guinea ever since the latter's independence, due to Sekou Toure's policy under which French corporate interests had been nationalized.

By 1971, already seventeen new factories had been built in the country. At the same time, Guinea's policy of support of Africa's anti-colonial struggle was strengthened that year and the Toure government condemned those African states which tried to eliminate the centres of radical resistance on the continent.

In July 1971, the government announced the discovery of a widespread network of spies in the pay of West German, French, United States and British intelligence services. A number of cabinet ministers, the Army Chief-of-Staff, the Archbishop and other leading politicians and military officers were implicated in a vast plot to overthrow the President and to return the country once again into the sphere of capitalist influence. This fifth column had received over the years some 12,000,000 dollars from the Western powers. Strengthened after this clash, the Toure government adopted in the course of 1972 a number of measures designed to consolidate the national economy, which was in obvious decline as a result of the scheming by the fifth column, whose objectives included the incitement of economic and political chaos in Guinea. It was then when the government accentuated the implementation of an economic plan.

The Ninth Congress of the PDG, held in April 1972, decided to restructure its political organization. The Central Committee was renamed National Leadership and a seven-member Executive Committee was formed. Toure was unanimously re-elected the party's General Secretary.

The post of Prime Minister was established for the first time and the necessary studies were undertaken for amending the 1958 constitution. The President spoke of the necessity of making the national languages official and of not using French any longer, for which purpose a large-scale educational plan was developed.

At its final session of that year, the National Assembly approved a five-year economic plan which gave priority to the exploitation of the country's mineral resources, bauxite in particular, whose reserves amount to some 2,000,000,000 tons. Iron ore and diamonds are next in the order of importance.

However, aggressive acts inspired from abroad did not cease. On January 20, 1973, Amilcar Cabral, Secretary-General of the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) was assassinated in Conakry. On March 31, Toure denounced another plot contrived by members of the government allied with the Western powers and the neighbouring countries, such as Senegal and the Ivory Coast, which had been quietly involved in one way or another in other plots against Guinea.

In September 1973, the PDG held its Tenth Congress in Conakry, which approved Guinea's Five-Year Plan of Economic and Social Development for the period 1973-1978.

In March 1973, the government accused imperialism of plotting another mercenary invasion of Guinea with the objective, among others, of liquidating the President. On May 13, 1976, the government accused the Guinean Minister of Justice and former Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, Diallo Telli, of being the leader—under the direction and with the support of NATO circles—of a plot to assassinate Sekou Toure.

The transformation of the PDG into a state party was carried out in February 1974 in order to give it executive power without relieving it of its tasks of political leadership.

In the economic sphere, Guinea signed important agreements on the exploitation of its mineral resources and on petroleum prospecting in the Gulf of Guinea, and assumed majority control of the companies operating in the country. At the same time taxes were raised on the exploitation of bauxite, iron ore and other natural resources.

A constitutional reform was announced in December 1974, the most important points of which included the right of the President—who was to be elected by popular vote under universal suffrage for a term of seven years—to appoint by decree the cabinet ministers. Under the constitutional amendments the President is accountable to the National Assembly for the policy of his cabinet and appoints all administrative officials and military officers. The Revolutionary National Assembly turned some of its powers over to the Party Congress and the National Revolutionary Council in order to assume the role of a Legislative Assembly. The National Revolutionary Council chooses the Party candidates for members of parliament and for the presidential office.

General elections were held on December 27, 1974, and Ahmed Sekou Toure was re-elected for the third time as Guinea's President, the office to which he had been previously elected in 1961 and 1968.

In its foreign policy, Guinea is one of the countries most actively involved in African anti-imperialist solidarity and has strengthened its ties with the progressive governments inside and outside the continent. It has played an important role in the non-aligned movement and in the struggle against colonialism and neo-colonialism, in particular against racism in Rhodesia, South Africa and Namibia.

In July 1975, a joint Franco-Guinean communique announced the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and in September 1976 Conakry and Paris exchanged ambassadors.

In the middle of 1978, under the auspices of President William Tolbert of Liberia, a reconciliation meeting was held in the Liberian capital between the heads of state in Senegal, Leopold Sedar Senghor, the Ivory Coast, Houphouet Boigny, and Guinea, Sekou Toure, which put an end to the long years of tension between the three countries. Shortly afterwards, their governments decided to re-establish diplomatic relations.

In the same year, President Toure made a tour of a number of Arab countries in Africa and the Middle East, and attended the 15th Summit Conference of the Organization of African Unity in Khartoum, in the Sudan.

The Eleventh Congress of the PDG, held in Conakry in November 1978, which coincided with the twentieth anniversary of Guinean independence, decided to rename the country the People's and Revolutionary Republic of Guinea and to re-elect Sekou Toure as the party's General Secretary.

In January 1980, parliamentary elections were held in which 210 members of the National Assembly were elected and Sekou Toure was re-elected President.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the mainstays of the Guinean economy. Agricultural production is pursued on 1,500,000 hectares of the total cultivable area of 24,536,000 hectares by some 80% of the economically active population,which was estimated to number 2,500,000 in 1975.

According to FAO data, the following quantities of crops and goods were produced in 1978: 400,000 tons of rice, 65,000 tons of bananas, 5,000 tons of coffee, 12,000 tons of palm kernels and 40,000 tons of palm oil (in 1977), 32,000 tons of peanuts, and 500,000 tons of manioc. Livestock included 1,600,000 head of cattle, 420,000 sheep and 37,000 pigs. The fishing industry, which operates through companies with mixed national, Kuwaiti and Japanese capital, produces the annual catch of some 20,000 tons. Light industry is not developed. The electric power output was 500,000,000 kWh in 1977. The mining industry, which provides the bulk of the export income, turned out 10,841,000 tons of bauxite in 1977 (i.e., 72% of the total exports) and 80,000 metric carats of diamonds in the same year. Bauxite production is in the hands of Malcoming Inc., a corporation controlled by United States, Canadian and Swiss capital, which holds 51% of the shares, while the rest is owned by the Guinean state.

According to available data, Guinea's GNP in 1978 was 1,070,000,000 dollars and per capita GNP was 210 dollars. The national budget for the fiscal year 1979 was balanced at 11,250,000,000 sylis. The 1977 balance of trade ended with a surplus of 965,000,000 sylis (5,664,000,000 worth of imports and 6,629,000,000 of exports). The national currency is the syli, which replaced the Guinean franc in 1972 and whose rate of exchange in 1980 was 18.75 sylis per U.S. dollar.

Government: The constitution now in force in Guinea defines the country as an independent, democratic, secular and social republic.

Judicial power is vested in a system of courts in individual districts and municipalities, which is headed by a Supreme Court. Under the last constitutional reform, effected in 1974, the Revolutionary National Assembly has legislative authority.

Armed forces: In 1979, the armed forces had approximately 8,000 men. The navy has 350 men and the air force 300 men.

The militias consist of approximately 30,000 volunteers, while the gendarmerie and the police have some 1,700 men.

Organizations: The Guinean Democratic Party (PDG), founded in 1947 as a section of the African Democratic Union, is the only political organization in the country, officially proclaimed as "the driving force of the nation" and led by the President of the Republic, Sekou Toure. It has approximately 8,000 village and municipal committees throughout the country and is the force which guides and mobilizes the masses of people for the realization of the nation's political and economic programmes, whose objective is the formation of a socialist state.

The PDG was restructured in 1972 and the size of its Central Committee was reduced to its present number of twenty-five. Its executive bureau has seven members.

At its Tenth Congress in 1973, the PDG outlined a five-year economic development plan.

The PDG has been pursuing a policy openly based on a five-point programme:

—the establishment and consolidation of a one-party people's state;

—a firm repudiation of any foreign interference in the internal affairs of the country;

—an overt, practical renunciation of the capitalist way of life for Guinea and a gradual shift of the country on to a socialist road of development;

—resolute support for the cause of African liberation;

—a broad and enthusiastic support of the world revolution against imperialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The PDG has held thus far a total of eleven congresses, beginning with the constituent one in May 1947, and then in October 1950, January 1958, June 1958, September 1959, December 1962, August 1963, September 1967, April 1972, September 1973, and the eleventh one in November 1978.

The Youth of the Guinean African Democratic Revolution (JRDA) emerged in 1959 in the course of the First Congress of Guinean Youth, held in Conakry; its founding was in keeping with a decision taken by the Political Bureau of the PDG. In 1975, the JRDA held its 13th congress,which adopted a new line aimed at a commitment by the youth to work for their country and proclaimed a continuous mobilization of youth for radicalizing the revolution. The JRDA has the following structure: basic organizations, or grass-roots-level committees with an unlimited number of members; seven or eight such units are subordinated to a regional committee of thirteen members, and the regional committees are guided by a National Commiteee of the same number of members. The JRDA is the only youth organization in the country and closely coordinates its work with that of the PDG at all levels.

The workers are associated in the National Confederation of Guinean Workers, which is a member of the All-African Trade Union Confederation. There is a trade union committee in every place of work, whose duty is to provide orientation to workers on that level.

Culture, education and sports: The Guinean government is striving to revive national culture,which had been affected by unwholesome Western influences.

A prominent role is being played in this effort by the Guinean Folklore Ballet, composed of sixty dancers and musicians who interpret the typical manifestations of their country's traditional art.

As regards education, in the period 1976-1977 the school attendance rate was 33%. In that school year 324,165 pupils attended primary schools, 124,455 students were enrolled

Official name: The Republic of Guinea-Bissau.
Area: 36,125 sq.km.
Borders: In the north it has a common frontier with Senegal, in the east and south with the Republic of Guinea, and in the west is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: The figures which are available are not exact. In 1977 it was estimated that the number of inhabitants varied between 600,000 and 900,000, while the United Nations listed the figure of 520,000. If the number 800,000 were taken as the average, then the country's population density would be 22 per sq. km and the annual rate of population growth 1.5%.

The three principal ethnic groups inhabiting the country are the Peul, the Mandinga and the Balante. The last are rice-growers and inhabit the coastal area, the Peul are farmers and cattle-raisers, while the Mandinga grow manioc, millet and peanuts, and inhabit the area on both sides of the frontier with Senegal.
Capital: Bissau (109,500 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Oio, Cacheu, Bafata, Jabu.
Languages: Portuguese is the official language. Creole—a blend of Portuguese and native dialects is widespread.
Public holidays: September 24, Independence Day.
Geography: The interior of the country is a vast plateau. The coast is flat, swampy and unhealthy. The dominant factor in this area are the rivers Geba, Corubal, Xayanga and Cacheu, which empty into the Atlantic Ocean, forming deep estuaries in the shape of inlets.

The climate is tropical and very humid with heavy rains in the summer, which turn the coast into a vast swamp and prevent all traffic except coastal navigation. The slopes of the interior are covered with thick forests which are almost impenetrable.
Brief history: Before the arrival of the first Europeans, a great variety of Sudanese peoples inhabited the northern coast of Upper Guinea—an area extending roughly from the Gambia River to the centre of the territory now occupied by the Ivory Coast and including present-day Guinea-Bissau—while the interior was inhabited mostly by the Mandinga and the Fula. The most important among the coastal tribes, settled precisely on the territory which is today Guinea-Bissau, were the Balante and the Pepal.

In 1446, the Portuguese navigator Nuno Tristao reached this area and just over two decades later the Portuguese had complete control of all trade with the local tribes through the Portuguese Guinea Company which was granted permission by the Church in 1697 to engage in the slave trade. Thereafter, the territory became the scene of almost uninterrupted inter-tribal wars whose express or implicit objective was the capture of slaves.

The slave-traffic monopoly exercised by Portugal was affected by competition from French, English and Dutch companies. The slave trade continued until 1840 both in Guinea and among the Portuguese settled on the nearby Cape Verde Islands. In 1889, the administration of those islands, which until then had also covered Guinea-Bissau, was separated when it got its own governor.

The native people never accepted the Portuguese presence and resisted the foreign occupier in different ways. First by striving for reforms and eventually for independence. The liberation movement greatly gained in strength after World War II.

It was in 1954 when the idea took shape of combining the anti-colonial struggle in Guinea and the Cape Verde Islands.

A young agronomist, Amilcar Cabral, became the main leader of this movement. Two years later, together with a small group of companions, he held a secret meeting on September 19, 1956, where they founded the African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC), which bore the burden of the armed struggle against Portuguese colonialism. Initially, the party pursued its activities in the urban centres and only later extended them to the rural areas as well.

The battle for national liberation began on August 3, 1959, when workers at the Pidjiguiti docks in the port of Bissau called the first strike organized by the PAIGC. The police, the army and the Portuguese colonial settlers confronted the demonstrators and shot at them. The casualties included 50 killed and more than a hundred wounded. The next month, on September 19, 1959, a PAIGC secret conference met in Bissau and worked out preparations for an armed struggle and for raising the political consciousness of the rural population.

Having learned from the massacre at Pidjiguiti, the leaders of the PAIGC decided to proceed with direct action if a final appeal for a "dialogue" with Lisbon should fail.

Two years later, in 1961, on the occasion of the second anniversary of the Pidjiguiti massacre, sabotage operations were carried out against Portuguese installations in the south of the country.

Once the political and military conditions had been created, the national revolution passed from its political stage to direct action both in the south and the north.

On January 23, 1963, a PAIGC commando unit attacked the Tite Barracks, thereby launching the armed struggle in the south of Guinea-Bissau. In July of the same year, a northern front was established and a conference was held from the 17th to the 22nd of the month with the objective of promoting the independence struggle on the Cape Verde Islands.

In 1964, when the PAIGC held its first congress in the liberated areas on February 13 to 17, the struggle entered a new stage of progress in all fields with the formation of the People's Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARP) and of educational centres providing instruction to children and youth.

In December 1964, the struggle began on the eastern front as well.

Confronted by the revolutionary struggle which began to grow in Guinea, the Portuguese colonial regime increased the number of its troops and unleashed a wave of repression against the patriots in the urban centres.

In December 1966, the PAIGC announced the liberation of more than half of the country's territory. At that time the Portuguese colonial troops numbered 25,000 men, that is 25 times more than in 1961.

In 1966, the struggle acquired a new character. The PAIGC went over to the offensive and the guerilla groups were transformed into a regular army. A new stage of the war opened when the FARP began to use mortars, field guns and bazookas against the enemy barracks and fortified camps.

The colonial regime which was in power in Portugal, the poorest and most backward nation in Europe, was unable to bear alone the burden of a colonial war costing annually some 800 million dollars. It was receiving aid from its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, especially the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany, its main suppliers of military equipment.

Besides its strategic position on the Atlantic Ocean, Guinea-Bissau has iron ore and bauxite, which attracted the attention of the international corporations.

The first arms were supplied to the villagers in the Kitafine region in the south in October 1967, and initiated the formation of people's militias in the liberated areas. The liberation of the southern and southeastern parts of the country was completed with the occupation of the fortified camp of Madina Boe on February 15, 1969.

It was in that year, when Portugal suffered the greatest losses from the liberation in secondary schools, 6,000 attended vocational schools, and 5,850 students were enrolled in institutions of higher learning. 1,500 boys and girls attend special courses for teacher training. The government is pursuing a literacy campaign among the adult population among which there was 90% illiteracy before independence.

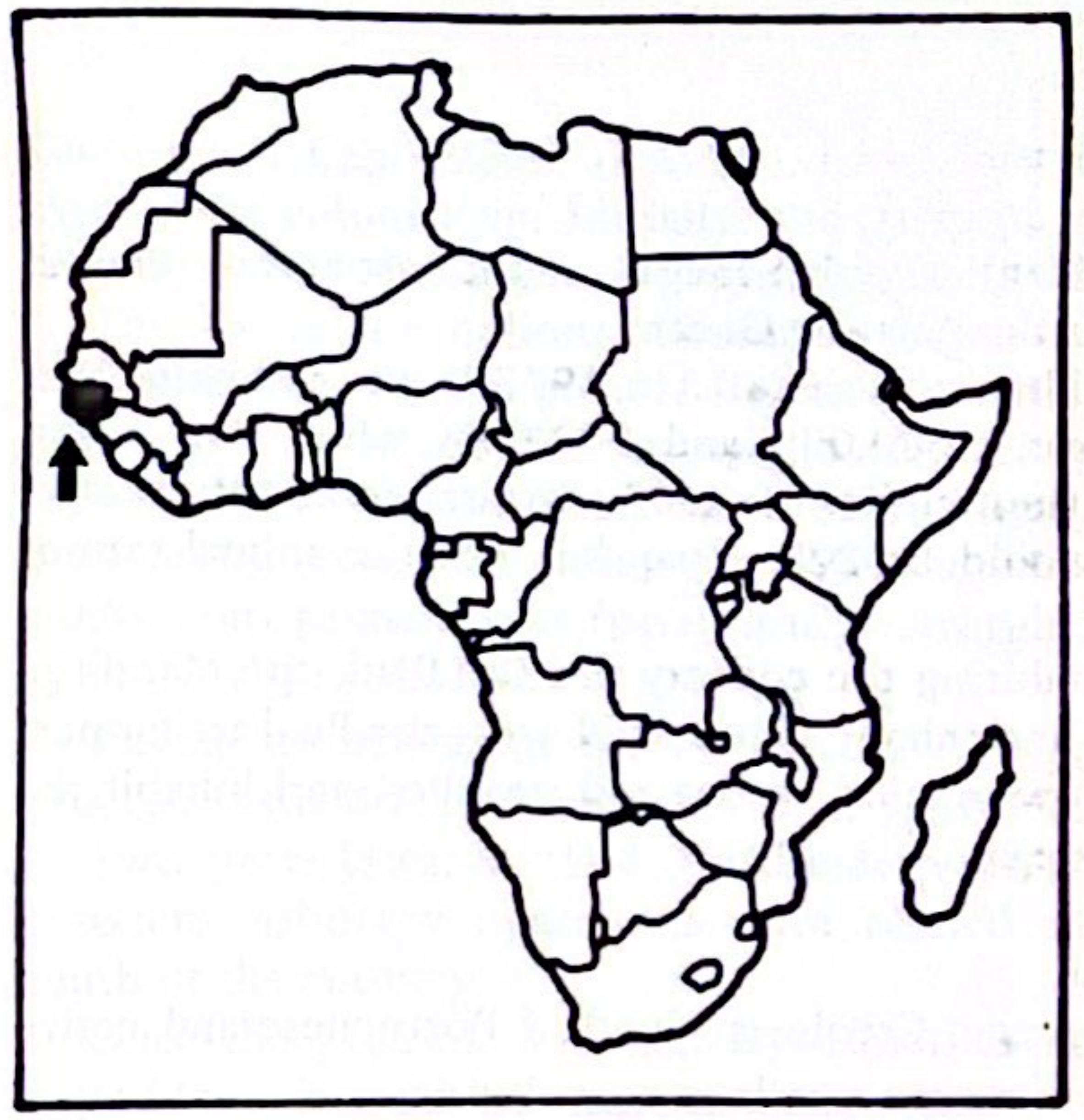
The Government also promotes a programme to make official the main national languages —Susu, Malinke, Fulani and Peul.

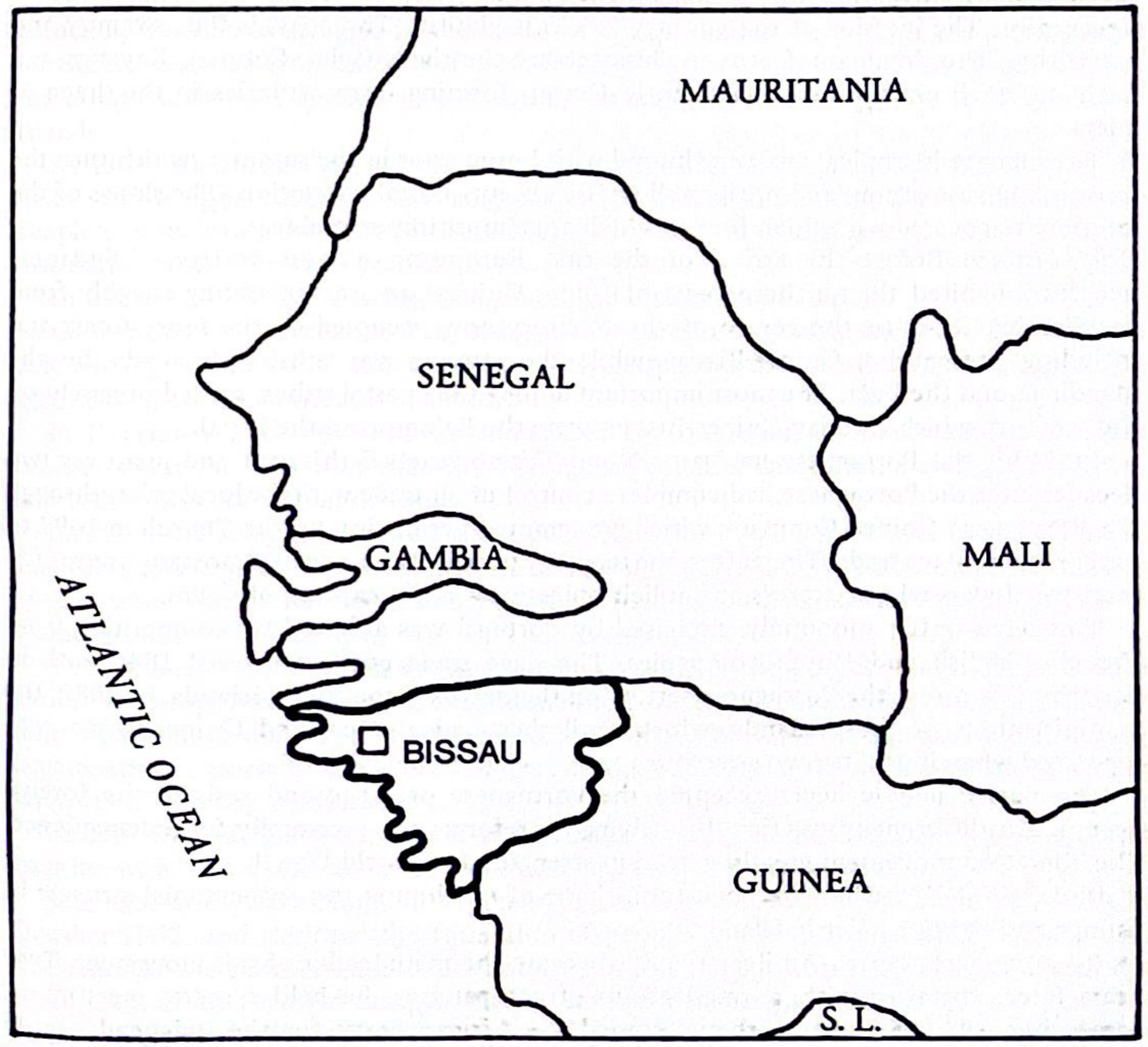
The most popular and practised sport in the country is football.

Public health: The number of hospitals in 1973 was 81 and their combined bed capacity was 6,858. Attending to the health of the population are 129 doctors, 17 dental surgeons and 802 nurses.

Religion: Under the constitution, Guinea is a secular state. 60% of the population are Moslems, the rest practise animist cults or the Roman Catholic creed.

GUINEA-BISSAU





50,000 tons of peanuts, 4,000 tons of millet, and 6,000 tons of copra. The government is putting into effect a programme of agricultural development based on the formation and encouragement of farming and consumer cooperatives. When the country gained independence, it had in the livestock sector 253,000 head of cattle, 68,000 sheep, 179,000 goats, and 165,000 pigs. The forests provided 530,000 cu.m of timber in 1973.

Industry, which is very limited and is basically of a light character, produces electric power (13,000,000 kWh in 1973), 5,000 tons of palm oil, 20,000 tons of cane sugar, and other products for local consumption. The country is poor in mineral resources, although prospecting is being carried out for non-metallic minerals. The formation of the independent republic destroyed the colonial monopoly of foreign trade. In the first half of 1975 —which is the last available report—foreign trade showed a deficit of 9,124,871 dollars, since imports amounted to 12,906,174 dollars while exports—mostly peanuts—were worth only 3,781,303 dollars.

One of the first steps taken by the government in the economic sphere after independence was the establishment of a National Bank and the replacement of the Guinea-Bissau escudo, which had parity with the Portuguese escudo, by the Guinea-Bissau peso valued at 32.95 per U.S. dollar.

Construction began in 1977 of two agro-industrial complexes, one thermal power station and one prefabricated housing plant in addition to other socio-economic development projects.

Government: When the National Assembly was dissolved on November 14, 1980, it was replaced by a Revolutionary Council, which is the supreme body of state power. This Council is headed by a President who at the same time heads the cabinet. There is also a Vice-President. The Revolutionary Council has both legislative and executive authority.

Armed forces: The FARP has not been subjected to structural changes after November 14, 1980. Its commander-in-chief, Joao da Silva, is also the Chief of Staff.

Organizations: The PAIGC, which has retained its original name in Guinea-Bissau, has ceased to be a supranational political party and is now national in character. Its General Secretary is Joao Bernardo Vieira. It is the leading political force in the country and operates nationally at all levels. It has a women's commission. The country's youth are organized in the Amilcar Cabral African Youth (JAAC). The National Union of Workers of Guinea-Bissau (UNTGB) associates workers and peasants. At the present, both organizations are undergoing a process of activation.

Culture, education and sports: Amilcar Cabral viewed the struggle for national liberation as a cultural struggle and thus the Guinean people's major cultural achievement was the victory of their revolutionary struggle. The first task raised by the PAIGC in the cultural sphere was the restoration of the people's national identity, their understanding and appreciation of their culture and of the necessity of enriching and developing it.

In 1978, film production was nationalized and a National Film Institute was established in order to promote the development of a film industry serving the people. Its objectives include dissemination of the achievements of the national film production in all countries and the establishment of film clubs and film libraries, which would help raise the political and cultural standard of the working people.

While the liberation war was still being fought, schools were being established in the woods in the liberated areas, where study was linked with the tasks of community survival, and cadres began to be trained for the conduct of the war as well as for the social reconstruction of the areas under PAIGC control.

After the victory, a Commissariat of Education and Culture was established and members of the armed forces began to be taught reading and writing.

An integral component of the present educational programmes is the participation of teachers and students both in productive work and communal services, and in the nation's political activities.

In 1976, Guinea-Bissau had 2,500 primary-school teachers and 400 secondary-school teachers in four secondary education institutes. There is one small faculty of agricultural sciences and four schools for training teachers. Of some 100,000 pupils, 80% attend primary schools. More than 700 students attend schools on scholarships in the Soviet Union, Cuba, the German Democratic Republic and other countries.

The most popular sport is football.

Public health: "The health of the people is our greatest wealth and main strength," reads a PAIGC slogan. In 1963, there were only four doctors in the Guinean forests. At the time when independence was proclaimed, this figure had risen to 40 doctors working in the countryside.

In the course of the liberation struggle, the PAIGC established a complete public health network which included a central hospital in each of the three principal regions, a small hospital serving each sector, and a number of dispensaries in the villages. With the help of the population, the PAIGC set up a number of health brigades whose main task is to visit the sick in the villages, to instruct the population how to prevent disease and treat children's ailments, and to advise people about hygiene and sanitation in general, as well as to implement the government's vaccination programmes.

At the present, the public health service has been decentralized from the capital, and hospitals and medical posts are being built in different parts of the country.

Religion: Traditional cults are being practised by the majority of the population. 35% of the people are Moslems and 5% Roman Catholics.

Official name: The Cooperative Republic of Guyana.
Area: 214,969 sq.km.
Borders: Located on the northeastern coast of South America, Guyana borders in the north the Atlantic Ocean, in the east on Surinam, in the south and southwest on Brazil, and in the west on Venezuela.
Population: 865,000 inhabitants according to 1979 estimates. 53% are of East Indian origin, 31% of African origin, 5% are ethnic Portuguese, and the rest are English, Chinese, Amerindians, and Mestizos. The 1976 rate of population growth was 3%.
Capital: Georgetown.
Principal cities: Linden, New Amsterdam, Corriverton, and Rose Hall. Together with the capital city, these urban communities are located in the coastal area, most of them on the mouths of the country's principal rivers.
Languages: English is the official language. Also widely spoken is Creole, a mixture of English and other languages and African dialects, as well as Hindi. The remnants of primitive Amerindian tribes have preserved their own language—some ten dialects.
Public holidays: February 23, Day of the Proclamation of the Cooperative Republic (1970); May 26, Independence Day (1966).
Geography: There is a coastal strip extending for some 450 km from the mouth of the Orinoco River to Corentyne River and varying in depth from 16 to 64 km. Although this strip represents only 4% of Guyana's total area, it contains 90% of its population. Along the coast there are some parts where dykes had to be erected, since the land lies several feet below sea level. There are also some relatively large salt lakes. In the interior there are large forests and mountains, as well as some plains in the south and the west of the country. Mt Roraima is the highest peak (2,700 m).

The rivers are large and swift-flowing with some impressive rapids and waterfalls. In the Amerindian language "Guyana" means "land of many waters", which is confirmed by the existence of such large rivers as the Essequibo, the Demerara, the Berbice, and the Corentyne. There is heavy rainfall, the annual average of which varies in the coastal zone from 200 to 255 cm and which comes mostly in two periods—from April to August and from November to January.

The temperature is subtropical and constant, but is moderately cool in the highlands.

Brief history: The present-day territory of Guyana was inhabited by Arawak and Carib Indians when Columbus first sighted its coast at the end of the 15th century. Various Spanish expeditions penetrated the area in the course of the subsequent two centuries, mostly in search of the legendary city of El Dorado which, however, was never found. Between 1530 and 1540, Walter Raleigh claimed possession of the territory between the Orinoco and Amazon rivers for Great Britain. In 1604, the English penetrated the interior along the Oyapock River, which today is in French Guyana. Some 45 years later the English founded a colony in present-day Surinam. The Dutch also claimed the territory ever since they had established themselves on the rivers Essequibo, Berbice and Demerara, and during the 18th century alternated their rule of the land with the British.

In 1763, a slave uprising seriously challenged the colonial system, whose authorities violently suppressed it; nevertheless, the Guyanese repeatedly rose up in the years to follow. The 1763 rebellion, which was led by a domestic slave, Cuffy, and others, is officially recalled every year.

In 1786, British troops from Barbados seized the territory held by the Dutch and in 1831 established British Guyana as a colony.

Three years later they abolished slavery, which had been instituted on Guyanese territory since the English had first settled there.

Many blacks left the estates on which they had worked and moved into villages organized as cooperatives, thus depriving the landlords of cheap labour. In order to replace them, the British introduced a system of "contracts" which in fact constituted forced labour. They recruited workers among the unemployed in China, Portugal and, mainly, India. In 1917, some 24,000 immigrants had arrived from India to the country which had a total population of 340,000. A widespread movement subsequently arose in India—promoted by the Congress Party—against this new form of slavery.

European colonialism exploited the socio-economic differences between the individual ethnic communities which were denied participation in the administration of the country. However, in 1922, the first trade union was formed and in 1930 sugar-mill and plantation workers stood in the forefront of a large-scale movement for higher pay. British troops suppressed the demonstrations, but Great Britain felt it necessary to introduce some changes but without altering the colonial system.

Since 1891, Britain also found herself obliged to introduce a new constitution permitting access to public adminstration posts by a minority of the Guyanese, but real power remained in the hands of the Governor-General appointed by London.

On the eve of World War II, Britain once again had to introduce some reforms in order to placate the discontent in her colonies and forcibly suppressed any social or economic demands.

Under a new constitution, suffrage was expanded in 1943 and greater parliamentary representation was instituted on the local level, while the Governor-General retained effective control. General elections were held in 1947, in which the majority of the parliamentary seats were won by the European landlords and the emerging Guyanese bourgeoisie (the Portuguese, Indo-Guyanese and Afro-Guyanese). However, Cheddi Jagan, too, was elected to the Legislative Council, representing for the first time in that body the people's will.

In the same period, a stong independence movement emerged, paralleled by Guyanese aspirations to hold the positions denied them for more than three centuries of colonial rule. The British then appointed a Commission of Enquiry which recommended the enactment of a new constitution and greater public participation in the electoral process. Universal suffrage was instituted, from which, however, illiterates were excluded, who constituted a large part of the population at that time. An Assembly and a Council of State were established, most of whose members were appointed by the British Governor.

In political party life, Jagan, together with the trade union leaders Ashton Chase, Jocelyn Hubbard and others, founded a Political Affairs Committee, the predecessor of today's Progressive People's Party (PPP).

Janet Jagan and Winifred Gaskin also launched for the first time a movement among the women of Guyana. The present-day President of Guyana, Forbes Burnham, ran together with the Jagans in the 1951 elections for seats in the Georgetown Council on the PPP ticket, but only Janet Jagan was elected.

The PPP had a large grass-roots base both in the countryside and in the towns and—for the first time in the country's political history—was multiracial in its character.

Burnham had recently returned to Guyana after having finished his law studies in England where he also led organizations of Caribbean students.

The electoral victory of the PPP in 1953 alarmed the British and United States governments, which described the new administration as a "Communist threat" in spite of the fact that the party's line was similar to that of most of the other popular political parties in the Eastern Caribbean. The PPP won 18 of the 25 parliamentary seats, Cheddi Jagan assumed the post of Prime Minister and began to pursue a popular programme. He changed movement. The Portuguese forces had to pull out of secure fortifications, and these operations liberated the entire length of the frontier with the Republic of Guinea. On the northern front, the principal operations were directed against the military camps of Sao Joao, Fulacunda, Nhala, Cameconde, Cantongo, the military installations in the ports of Enxude and Jabanda, and in the town of Bolama.

On November 22, 1970, the Portuguese launched their aggression against the Republic of Guinea with the objective of overthrowing President Ahmed Sekou Toure and of killing the top leaders of the PAIGC whose General Secretariat had its headquarters in Conakry.

In August 1971, the Supreme Council of the liberation struggle decided to proclaim the new, independent state of Guinea-Bissau.

Over a period of eight months—from January to August 1972—preparations were made for the election of members of regional councils and of the First National People's Assembly. An intensive campaign of information, debates and discussion was conducted both in the basic PAIGC organizations and at popular meetings.

The elections were a great success and had a major repercussion internationally because they constituted a novel element, a rarely used form of the people's struggle for liberation from colonial and imperialist domination.

An inspection tour made by members of the U.N. Committee for Decolonization in the liberated areas produced a historical resolution passed by the U.N. General Assembly on November 14, 1972, which recognized the PAIGC as the sole and legitimate representative of the people of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.

On November 22 of the same year, the Security Council, too, recognized the PAIGC which was granted observer status in the United Nations Organization.

Under the strategic plans of imperialism, 1973 was to have been the year of the liquidation of the African liberation movements. This plot of a continental scope began to be realized the day after the defeat of the aggression staged against the Republic of Guinea on November 22, 1970.

Faced by the failure of its plans, colonialism, imperialism and reaction put into effect another scheme to liquidate physically Amilcar Cabral. On January 20, 1973, the Secretary-General of the PAIGC fell in Conakry, shot by Portuguese secret service agents and their accomplices. The assassination of Cabral was designed to sow confusion in the PAIGC ranks, to disorientate the masses of the people, to demoralize the national liberation fighters and to provoke tribal differences and conflicts.

Subsequently, the liberation forces scored a great victory in a general offensive which brought about the fall of the strategic Guilledje Barracks, in which arms and military documents were captured, and which partially neutralized—for the first time in the history of the liberation struggle—the enemy's air force.

Between March 23, 1973 and January 1974 anti-aircraft missiles in the hands of the PAIGC fighters destroyed 36 Portuguese airplanes.

The Second Congress of the PAIGC, held in the liberated areas of Guinea-Bissau from July 18 to 22, 1973, was a historical event. It decided to establish a Permanent Secretariat and to expand the Supreme Council of the Struggle from 81 to 85 members. It also agreed to convene the First National People's Assembly for the purpose of proclaiming the State of Guinea-Bissau, as well as of forming an Executive and of enacting the first constitution in the country's history.

The First Assembly, meeting in Boe on September 23 and 24, 1973, proclaimed the independence of Guinea-Bissau. The forty-second African state was recognized by more than sixty nations in the course of the first month of its existence.

The government of Guinea-Bissau immediately undertook the task of organizing the

country's infrastructure which the Portuguese colonialists had created only for the conduct of the war.

As a result of the national liberation struggle there had existed an independent state since 1968 and only a part of the country, the urban centres, was occupied by Portugese military forces.

Within a short time, state structures of the emerging republic began to function throughout the country, which were similar to those established in the liberated areas. Parallel with its military successes, the PAIGC raised its international prestige in 1974, when a special mission of the U.N. Committee for Decolonialization made another visit to the liberated areas on April 2 to 9.

Meeting in Algiers, representatives of the PAIGC and Portugal signed on August 26, 1974, documents on the transfer of power by the Portuguese authorities to those of Guinea. Also signed was an agreement on the withdrawal of Portuguese troops from the territory of Guinea-Bissau and a protocol in which Portugal accepted the right to independence of the Cape Verde Islands.

The Portuguese government officially recognized the independence of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau on September 12, 1974, thus ending Portugal's colonial rule.

The PAIGC held its third congress—the first one after its military victory—from November 15 to 20, 1977. Its principal objectives included the adjustment of the party's structure to the essential needs of the new stage of the struggle, i.e., the consolidation of political independence, extrication of the two countries from their poverty and their economic dependence inherited from the past five centuries of Portuguese domination, construction of a balanced and independent economy, and advance towards a structural unity of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. As regards foreign policy, the congress re-asserted that it was based on the principles of anti-imperialism, peaceful co-existence and non-alignment.

The PAIGC then tackled the task of eliminating the consequences of the liberation war on the basis of a large-scale plan of national reconstruction. When the government took control of the last areas under Portuguese domination in October 1974, the country's economic situation was one of utter stagnation because the state treasury was empty and, moreover, the Portuguese had taken with them everything they could. Among other problems, the new government also had to cope with an extremely unbalanced balance of trade, since exports covered barely 10% of the imports, as well as with a very serious shortage of food.

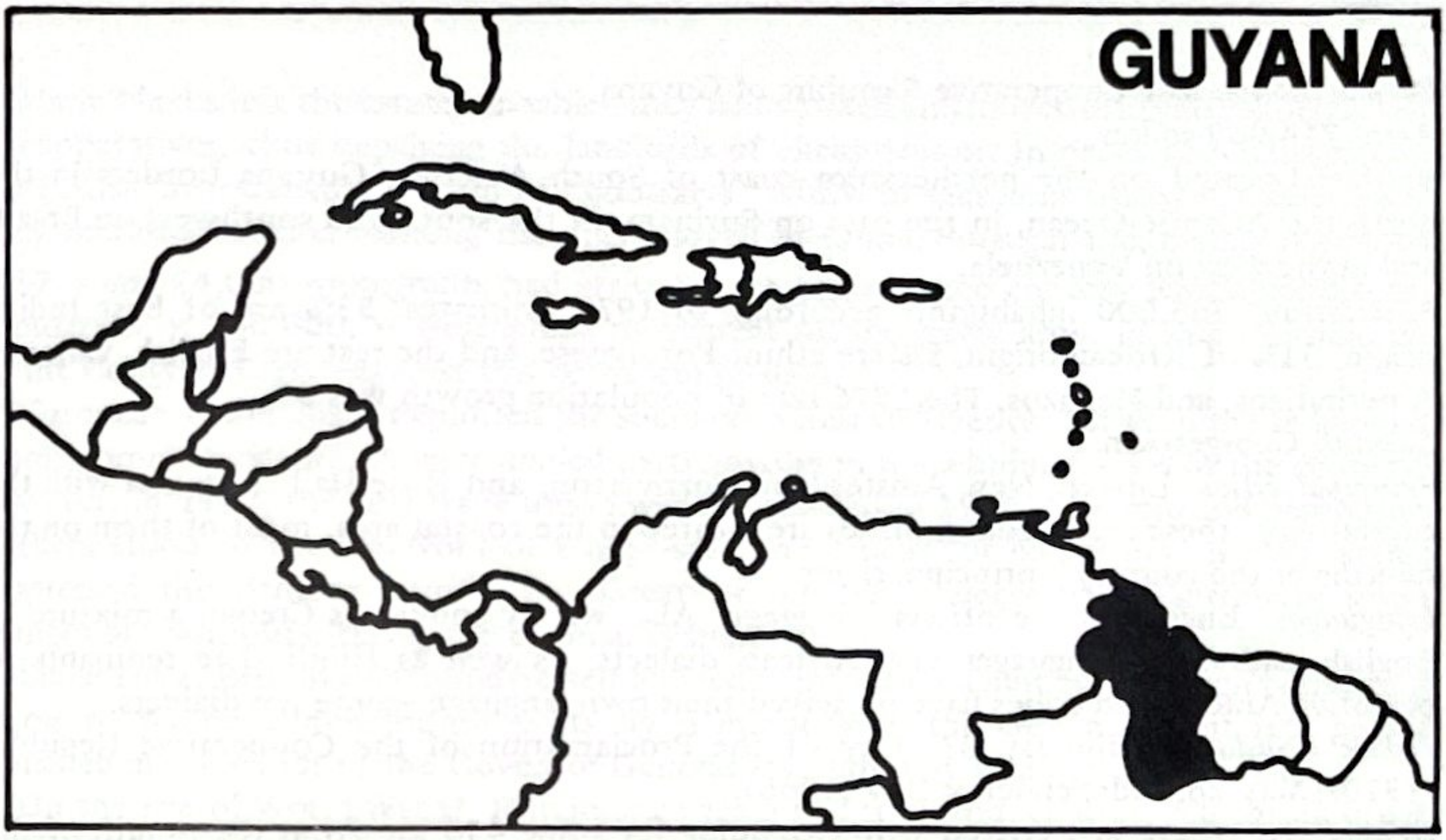
In addition to extending its control over key branches of the national economy, the PAIGC adopted an economic and social programme in which it gave absolute priority to agricultural development.

On November 14, 1980, President Luis Cabral was dismissed and replaced by Joao Bernardo "Nino" Vieira in a move which initiated a stage described as re-adjustment by the present leaders of the country.

This change in the top leadership of Guinea-Bissau produced obvious problems in the relations between that country and Cape Verde, detrimental to the project of their unification.

In December 1980, the Foreign Ministers of Angola, Mozambique and Sao Tome visited Bissau and held talks with the president of the Revolutionary Council, Joao Bernardo Vieira, in order to mediate in the conflict between Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde.

Economy: The national economy of Guinea-Bissau is based on agriculture which is being pursued on 275,000 hectares out of the total cultivable area of 2,800,000 hectares by 86% of the economically active population, estimated at 178,000 in 1970. According to FAO data and other sources, it produces 90,000 tons of rice, 41,000 tons of manioc,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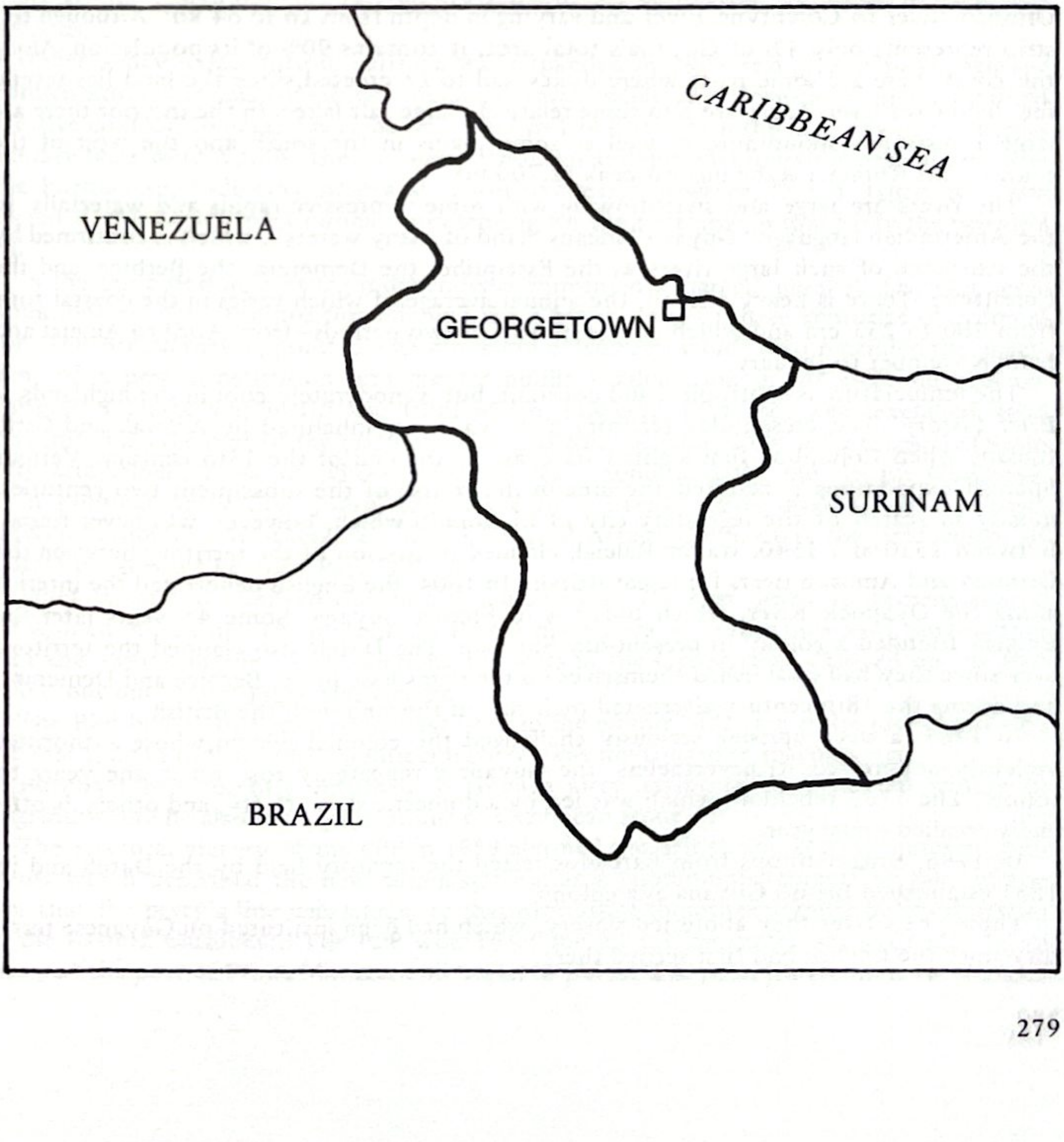
CARIBBEAN SEA
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a number of repressive measures, such as the notorious law against subversive publications or the ban on the entry into Guyana of Caribbean labour leaders. He adopted measures benefiting rice-growers, increased scholarships and when the British Queen visited Jamaica, refused to send a delegation to meet her on that island. The Jagan government also established public schools and promoted the growth of the trade unions, which caused immediate concern of the colonial authorities and the owners of the large sugar companies. The established bureaucracy also began to sabotage the work of the new government.

After the government had been in power 133 days, British warships arrived in Georgetown and the troops they brought seized the offices of the PPP and the Legislative Council, and deposed the government. London suspended the constitution of British Guyana—considered the most advanced in the Eastern Caribbean—dismissed the elected ministers, and declared that "Communism" had been repelled. A period of persecution set in and many PPP leaders, including Jagan and Burnham, were imprisoned. A state of emergency was proclaimed and was in force for four years.

The colonial authorities suppressed the trade unions and tried to split the workers and the peasantry, while at the same time intensifying the tension among the country's different ethnic groups.

A split occurred within the PPP in 1955. Cheddi Jagan assumed the leadership of that party and Burnham formed his own People's National Congress (PNC). In 1956 Britain announced a new constitution which enhanced the authority of the Governor. The document was opposed by all the political parties, but it was eventually imposed on the country and the 1957 elections were prepared under its provisions.

In those historical elections the PPP won the majority of 13 seats, while the PNC won three seats and the rightist groups only one. In that period Jagan had stepped up the struggle for the independence of Guyana.

The government of Prime Minister Jagan tried to put into effect its programme within the limits set by the British government. It called for large investments, for irrigation and drainage projects, for rice marketing facilities, and for improvements in public health and education. However, the PPP government did not obtain the financial aid for the realization of its plans. The international credit organizations controlled by the major capitalist powers, the United States and Great Britain in particular, turned down all requests for such assistance, although two years later Britain did extend some minor loans to Guyana.

In 1958 Jagan made a tour of a number of countries, seeking financial assistance for the realization of his projects. By 1959 the economic situation of British Guyana had grown desperate. The colonial regime had made a few concessions and put into effect some assistance measures, but the great majority of the PPP government projects were blocked by lack of funds.

Jagan requested assistance from the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, but this possible help was frustrated by the control exercised by the British over Guyana's foreign trade and external relations. Shortly before the expiration of its term of office, in the face of rejection of assistance by the capitalist countries and of the obstacles hampering aid from the socialist countries, the PPP government stepped up its demands for independence.

In 1960 Great Britain invited the political leaders of British Guyana to a constitutional conference, which was attended by Jagan, Burnham and Peter D'Augiar, but they could not reach agreement on national independence.

New elections were held in 1961 and the PPP won 20 of the 35 seats, the PNC 11 and the United Force four.

The Legislative Assembly, which was elected under the new constitution, met on October 6, 1961, but the PNC walked out protest.

The Jagan government once again ran into difficulties in trying to obtain finance for its development projects. In spite of his many efforts—he travelled to the United Nations, met with President John F. Kennedy, and visited Canada—Jagan got very little funding.

At home, he tried to adopt an austerity budget which would favour the poorest strata of the population. This produced an anti-government campaign waged by different sectors of the poulation. On February 16, 1962, violent disturbances broke out of a racial and partisan character. The government, which could not rely on the loyalty of the police, asked for intervention by the British troops stationed at the Atkinson Field base (today the Timehri Airport). When these troops refused to act, British units were brought in from Jamaica. Many buildings were set on fire, widespread strikes were held and there was street violence. A policeman and five civilians were killed and about a hundred people were wounded.

In the course of the subsequent 14 months Jagan governed in relative calm and succeeded in establishing contacts with the socialist countries with which he signed advantageous economic agreements.

Jagan was also able to effect a number of popular projects. Some unification moves occurred between the PPP and the PNC. However, an anti-communist campaign resulted in new disturbances in 1963, which claimed one dead, twenty wounded and considerable material damage. Through strikes, certain groups tried to foment racial tension.

After a new constitutional conference held in London in 1964, elections took place in British Guyana under the system of proportional representation. The PPP obtained 45.8% of the vote, the PNC 40%, and the United Force 12.4%.

A coalition was then formed by the PNC and the United Force which set up a government under the leadership of Prime Minister Burnham, in which D'Aguiar took the post of Finance Minister.

When Burnham and D'Aguiar went to London in 1964 to attend what was to be the last constitutional conference before Guyana's independence, Jagan did not participate in the meeting.

The conference set May 26, 1966, as the date for the proclamation of indpendence, which then took place under Burnham's leadership.

In the first post-independence elections held in Guyana in 1968, the PNC received 50.4% of the vote, the PPP 36.5% and the United Force 7.5%. The government coalition broke up and the United Force joined the opposition. Together with the PPP it accused the PNC of fraudulent practices in the previous elections.

In February 1970 the government changed Guyana's parliamentary system into a republican one and renamed the country the Cooperative Republic of Guyana.

New, disputed elections were held in 1973, in which—according to the official results—the PNC won 37 seats, the PPP fourteen and the rightist Liberal Party two. The PPP accused the government of fraud and refused to take its seats in the parliament.

In 1970, Guyana signed an agreement with the neighbouring countries, Venezuela and Surinam, which was then a Dutch colony, on postponing the settlement of territorial claims and the delimitation of frontiers until 1982.

In 1972, the Guyanese capital played host to a conference of Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Countries, which was attended by the top diplomats of 59 member-countries and ten observers, Guyana had joined the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in 1970 and subsequently became a member of its Coordinating Bureau.

The PNC government adopted a number of nationalization measures and according to official figures has gained control over approximately 80% of the national economy. Similarly, it took important steps towards an independent foreign policy. As a result, talks began between Jagan and Burnham on the unification of their respective political parties but in 1977 they were suspended and the country once again experienced a polarization of its political forces, while at the same time pressure was being put on Guyana and it was threatened with destablization.

In October 1976, a passenger plane of the Cuban Airlines became the target of a terrorist attack near Barbados and crashed, killing 73 passengers, including eleven young Guyanese on their way to study medicine in Cuba. The Guyanese government and all the country's political organizations condemned the sabotage and placed the responsibility on the CIA.

In 1978, after drastic austerity measures, dictated by the International Monetary Fund, had been introduced, a referendum was held to approve a new constitution. The government announced that 97% of the electorate had voted for the document, while the opposition, which had called for abstention from the voting, once again claimed electoral fraud.

The Prime Minister submitted a draft constitution, which was finally approved after changes proposed by different sectors and which replaced the constitution of 1966, enacted in the wake of independence.

In recent years, a new political movement, the Working People's Alliance (WPA), has emerged and declared its open opposition to the Burnham government, but has not participated in the electoral process. After many popular demonstrations one of its principal leaders, the well-known historian Walter Rodney, was killed. The assassination had strong reprecussions in the whole Caribbean area where Rodney had enjoyed great respect. Other violent acts have also occurred in recent years, including the killing of the Minister of Education, Vincent Teekah.

New elections were held in Guyana at the end of 1980 and were officially won by the PNC, although the PPP again claimed electoral fraud. Under the provisions of the new constitution, Burnham assumed the office of Executive President.

In January 1981, Venezuelan authorities revived the frontier dispute with Guyana, although under the existing treaty consideration of this problem had been postponed until 1982. Venezuela is claiming almost two-thirds of Guyanese territory. As in the case of the dispute between Colombia and Venezuela, this territory is rich in petroleum and attracts the interests of the transnational oil companies.

Economy: The principal branches of the Guyanese economy, which also has a number of export commodities, include bauxite and sugar cane production, as well as the production of rice and other farm products.

As many other developing countries, Guyana has an economy suffering from a number of weaknesses—limited basic resources, a small home market, a high unemployment rate, a limited infrastructure, emigration of its technical and skilled workers, a slow rate of agricultural growth, and a deficit balance of payments.

After centuries of colonial exploitation and more recently of exploitation by mining and commercial transnational corporations, the economy has been one of the main problems confronting the different administrations of the country. The Burnham government has nationalized almost 80% of the economy.

In 1971 the government bought and took charge of the Demerara Bauxite Company Ltd. (DEMBA), which was owned by the Aluminium Company of Canada (ALCAN) and which is now known as the Guyana Bauxite Company Ltd. (GUYBAU); it has 5,000 workers.

In 1975, the government announced the purchase of the other bauxite company established in the country, which was owned by the Reynolds Metal Company of the United States. Thus the entire roduction of bauxite came under the full control of the Guyanese state.

The 1976 output of bauxite amounted to 741,000 tons, while the production of its derivate—alumina—was 274,000 tons.

Other minerals and valuable export items are uncut diamonds and gold, while there also exist deposits of iron ore, copper, molybdenum, chromuim, nickel and other ores not yet commercially exploited.

The sugar industry, which is also nationalized, continues to provide the major contribution to the economic development of the country in the agricultural sector. Exports of sugar and its derivates exceed in value the total of all the other agricultural exports. In 1976, Guyana produced roughtly 340,000 tons of this commodity. In the same year, the Guyana Sugar Corporation was established with the objective of developing the production of sugar. The sugar industry, which consists of eleven production centres, employs some 20,000 workers.

Rice is another major crop for Guyana's economy, employing thousands of workers, although in recent years its production has suffered from different adverse effects. According to official figures, 300,000 tons of rice were produced in 1977.

Sugar, rice and bauxite account for 38% of Guyana's gross production and in 1976 the income from these industries and production represented 87% of the total value of the country's exports. The three branches of the national economy moreover are the main sources of employment for Guyana's population.

Guyana is increasing the development of its fishing industry (including shrimping), its livestock production and recently of its poultry production. Other products include coconut oil, copra, citrus fruit and vegetables.

Guyana possess more than 181,300 sq.km of forests, which, however, require for their exploitation large investments in the economic infrastructure. Plans have been drawn up for the creation of a timber industry. As regards other industry, it is rather limited to such basic products as food, beverages, cigars, medical drugs, textiles and small boats.

Although situated on the American continent, Guyana's trade is directed because of historical and cultural reasons towards Europe, the United States, Canada, and the English-speaking Caribbean countries. In 1977, Great Britain, the United States and Canada accounted for 60% of Guyanese exports and imports.

Guyana also began to diversify its markets by signing trade agreements with China, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries.

In 1977, finding itself in a difficult economic situation, Guyana received its very first credits from the International Monetary Fund.

Government: As envisaged in Guyana's new constitution, in December 1980, Prime Minister Forbes Burnham assumed the office of Executive President, and thus was abolished the ceremonial presidency held until then by Arthur Chung. The President heads a cabinet of 31 members, which is accountable to the National Assembly expanded under the new constitution to 75 seats.

Elegibility to vote is acquired at the age of eighteen years. The country is divided into ten administrative districts—seven in the coastal area and three in the interior. Each district is headed by a Chief Administrative Officer. There are some 60 local authorities. Moreover, the country is divided into six regions, each headed by a regional minister.

Armed forces: Since 1972, military service has been compulsory in the army; in 1976, a National Militia was established as an auxiliary force. There are, in addition, an urban and rural police force and an education organization of a paramilitary character, known as National Service. President Burnham is the Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.

Organizations: The Progressive People's Party (PPP) led by former Prime Minister Cheddi

Jagan, was founded in 1950 and is at present in opposition to the government of Forbes Burnham, the leader of the People's National Congress Party (PNC) which in 1955 split away from the PPP. The PPP publishes the periodical The Mirror, while the press organ of the PNC is The New Nation.

The rightist United Force Party was formed in 1960. In 1973, the party split and was formed only by small conservative groups and today is led by Peter D'Aguiar.

A recently formed organization is the Working People's Alliance (WPA), which does not run in elections and is strongly critical of the government. It is led by a group of young intellectuals and one of its leaders was the historian Walter Rodney.

There is also a Trade Union Centre (TUC) in Guyana, which was founded in 1941 and which associates 22 unions with a total membership of 60,000. It is affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. There exist, in addition, many organizations of a religious and cultural character.

Culture, education and sports: Guyanese cultural expressions necessarily reflect the whole spectrum of the distinctive ethnic groups that make up the country's population. Similarly, the different stages in the history of the Guyanese people—from the European conquest and colonization to the abolition of slavery and independence—have left their imprint on the cultural make-up of the country. At present, Guyana, which is little influenced by its neighbours—Venezuela, Brazil and Surinam—is promoting historical studies aimed at forging its own national culture.

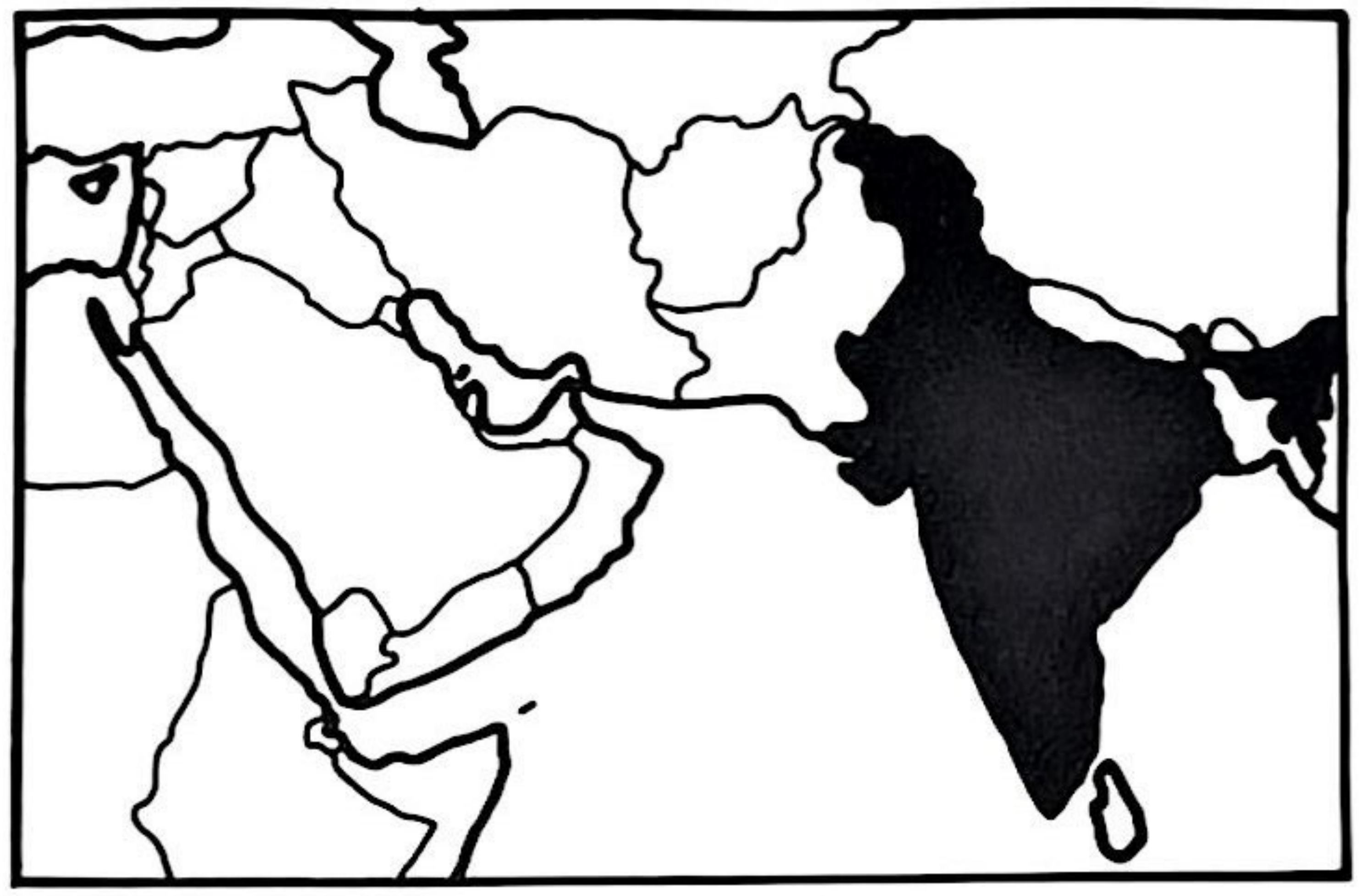
Education is compulsory up to the age of fourteen. Since 1976, all schools are coeducational and instruction is free, except for some commercial educational centres. There are 650 elementary and secondary schools with an enrolment of 200,000 pupils, of whom only 1% proceed with higher education. Guyana's first university was founded in 1973. The illiteracy rate was 14% in 1977.

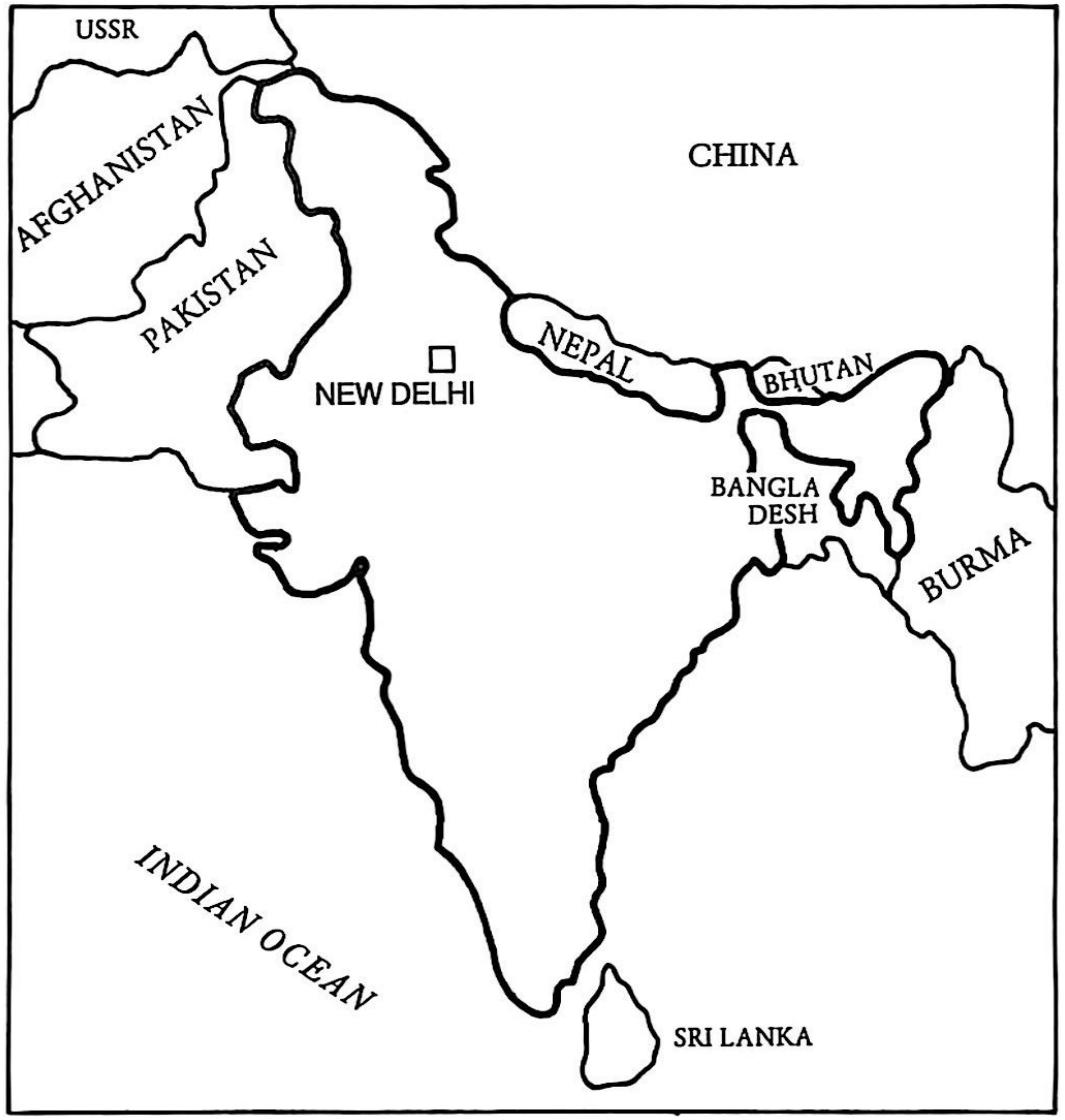
Guyana's national sport—as in the other English-speaking Caribbean countries—is cricket. Also popular are football, athletics and boxing.

Public health: Guyana has fifteen hospitals—three of them specialized clinics—with the total capacity of 2,500 beds. There are also approximately 50 mother-and-child care centres. Internationalist Cuban medical teams operate alongside their Guyanese colleagues both in Georgetown and at different points in the interior. In spite of systematic vaccination programmes, different epidemics have occasionally appeared. According to some recent statistics, the infant mortality rate is 61 per thousand live-born babies, the average life expectancy is 45 years, and there is one doctor per 5,000 inhabitants, although in the rural areas the average is 0.8 per 10,000, while in urban areas it is 8 per 10,000 inhabitants.

Religion: There are three main religious denominations in the country—Christian (56.7% of the population), Hindu (33.5%) and Moslem (8.8%). Freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed.

INDIA





Official name: The Republic of India.
Area: 3,287,782 sq.km, including the Indian part of Kashmir and Sikkim.
Borders: In the west, India's coast is formed by the Arabian Sea, in the East by the Bay of Bengal, in the north it has a common frontier with China, Bhutan and Nepal, in the northwest with Pakistan and in the northeast with Burma and Bangladesh.
Population: 650,982,000 inhabitants according to 1979 estimates. The annual rate of population growth was 2.1% in the period 1970-1974.
Capital: New Delhi (3,834,000 inhabitants in 1977).
Principal cities: Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Ahmedabad.
Languages: Hindi and English are official. There are also 16 regional languages and 844 other languages and dialects are spoken.
Public holidays: January 26, Proclamation of the Republic; August 15, Independence Day.
Geography: India's territorial extension makes it the seventh largest country in the world. It constitutes a geographical entity separate from the rest of the Asian continent. India forms an inverted triangle with its base in the Himalaya range and its point protruding into the Indian Ocean a very short distance from the island of Sri Lanka. India's coastline measures some 5,600 km. The western, or Malabar coast is formed by the Arabian Sea, and it is there where we find the port of Bombay. The eastern, or Coromandel, coast is washed by the waters of the Bay of Bengal. It has long stretches of marshland. Its most important port is that of Madras.

The distance between India's northernmost point—the Kilik Pass in Kashmir—and the southernmost point—Cape Comorin--is 3,200 km. In the east-west direction, the extreme points are separated by a distance of 2,700 km. There are three well-defined geographical areas. In the north is the arc of the Himalaya range with its broad valleys, where Nepal and Bhutan are also situated. The major elevations in the Indian-held Himalayas include Mt. Godwin Austen (8,610 m), Nanga Parbat (8,125 m), and Nanda Devi (7,817 m). This mountainous area is 2,414 km long and 240 to 320 km wide. There are other mountain chains along India's frontiers with Burma and Bangladesh, but they are very much lower.

Further to the south extends the Hindustan Plain which is one of the world's greatest alluvial areas. The Ganges (2,480 km long) and the Brahmaputra (2,700 km long) form its two large river basins. The dividing line between the Hindustan Plain and the Deccan, which is the third geographical area, is formed by a mountain chain made of the Vidhya, Aravali and Chota Nagpur ranges.

The Deccan is a vast plateau flanked by two mountain chains running parallel with the coasts. On the one side are the Western Ghats, where the most prominent elevations are Mt. Anaimudi (2,695 m) and Mt. Nilgiri (2,633 m), and on the other side of the subcontinent are the Eastern Ghats. Deccan's most important rivers are the Gonadari (1,998 km long), the Narbada and the Krishra, both of which run for more than 1,280 km.

The Tropic of Cancer cuts across India but temperatures are generally high throughout the country. The Himalaya range prevents masses of cold air from moving south from Central Asia. The life of the country is moreover dominated by the monsoon cycle. The hottest season extends from March to July, when in some parts of India the temperature may rise to 50°C. On the other hand, in regions which are considered cold (i.e., from New Delhi to the Punjab) temperatures do not drop below 10°C during the winter season.

The dry season extends from December to February, while the rainy season lasts from June to November. It is then when the temperature begins to cool down regularly and in some areas, such as Assam, the monsoons cause major floods.

Brief history: The geographical barrier of the Himalaya range did not prevent various peoples and cultures from penetrating the Indian subcontinent always from the northwest through the Hindu Kush Pass.

In the second half of the second millenium B.C., the Ayrans arrived in India and imposed their more advanced culture and social organization on the mountainous region and the Hindustan plain. However, the earlier, megalithic cultures established on the Deccan plateau continued their independent existence.

Four centuries later, around the year 1000 B.C., Turkic peoples made their way into the subcontinent to be followed in 327 B.C. by Alexander the Great and his armies. However, the kingdoms established by that Greek conqueror were toppled less than a quarter of a century later by Chandragupta Maurya who thereby laid the territorial foundations of the first autochthonous Indian empire.

It was under the reign of Emperor Asoka (273-232 B.C.), who is viewed as the major political personality of ancient India, that the Maurya realm reached its greatest glory. Asoka's principal achievement was the unification of most of India's territory under a single administration.

The next important historical period after Asoka's reign was the Gupta Empire established in the Ganges basin in 385 A.D. It was under the Guptas, when the fine arts, architecture, literature, philosophy and science, including mathematics, scored great achievements.

The Gupta Empire was followed by other dynasties of limited political significance, until the Moslems began penetrating India in the 11th century. A century later they reached the Bay of Bengal.

Then, at the end of the 14 century, came Tamerlane's Mongol armies which subjugated most of the kingdoms in northern India and also seized Delhi.

Two centuries later the Europeans began to arrive in India, this time by sea. The first to come were the Portuguese who established their centre in Goa. Next came the Dutch, who founded several minor commercial posts on Indian territory, the French and the English.

The local Indian princes and rulers began fighting each other for winning advantages and assistance from the Europeans, as well as to gain economic benefits and superiority over their adversaries. These conflicts weakened them and helped the Persians to invade India and to occupy Delhi in 1739. Twenty years later, the Afghans followed in the Persians' footsteps.

On the other hand, the contradictions between the European colonial powers, which contested each other's possessions gained in different parts of India, also had an impact on the history of the subcontinent. Eventually, Great Britain emerged victorious from this struggle, having dislodged France and Holland and restricted the Portuguese presence to Goa. By 1858, Britain gained control of the entire Indian subcontinent.

However, the domination and exploitation of the immense territory was not achieved without resistance and uprisings, many of them violent. The major rebellion took place in Bengal. It shook the very foundations of British rule and was suppressed with extreme violence and brutality in order to teach the Indians a lesson. After that British colonial power accelerated the construction of its infrastructure through the institution of the British judicial and political system, as well as through large-scale cultural penetration, including the inculcation of aesthetic and moral precepts designed to alienate the Indians from their own cultural heritage.

As British colonial exploitation gained in strength and as British cultural influence spread to all spheres of Indian life, the people were forced to seek refuge in religion. The hatred provoked by the outrages committed by the colonialists was weakened as the main contradiction between the colony and the metropolitan power was diverted into a conflict between the Hindus and the Moslems.

In his autobiography, written in 1953, Jawaharlal Nehru explained that British colonial policy invariably involved the prevention of any joint action by the Hindus and the Moslems, and, on the contrary, encouraged confrontation between the two religious communities.

The influence of the English industrial revolution and of the French bourgeois revolution reached India in the middle of the 19th century, when some sectors of the Indian bourgeoisie began to demand political concessions and more economic freedom for themselves.

In 1885, the government in London sponsored the formation of a consultative body made up of intellectuals and representatives of the middle class and the rich landowners. This body was called the Indian National Congress and its members called for a certain degree of political representation in the colonial administration as well as for some minor economic concessions of a reformist nature.

After World War I, the Indian National Congress was converted into a political party, whose most progressive wing demanded the independence of India. The most prominent personality of that period was Mahatma Gandhi who had become the principal leader of the Indian National Congress and of the liberation movement. In keeping with the cultural characteristics of his people, Gandhi promoted a method of non-violent struggle, which reached its climax in 1930, when he called for a movement of national disobedience and for a boycott of British consumer goods as a means of protesting against the British salt monopoly. The colonial authorities suppressed the movement of peaceful protest and imprisoned Mahatma Gandhi.

A period of political tension follwed, due to serious differences between the colonial administration and the progressive majority of the Inidan National Congress Party. It was then when the British authorized the formation of the Moselm League as a means of obstructing the attainment of unity against British domination. Thus, when Britain proposed to grant India the status of a dominion with the objective extending her control, the Indian National Congress Party and the Moslem League failed to work out a common position on rejecting this manoeuvre.

In the course of time, the defence of the economic interests of the conservative wing, tied to British financial capital, asserted itself in addition to the religious differences between the two groups. This led in August 1935, when a constitution was adopted, to violent debate within the Indian National Congress Party, whose conservative wing accepted the document, while the radical wing, led by Jawaharlal Nehru, turned it down and urged that it should be sabotaged.

In 1942, Britain rejected a demand by the Congress Party to transfer power to representatives of the people. Nehru was imprisoned together with a group of his followers. Then followed a period of protests, workers' strikes and peasant uprisings, many of them organized and led by the Communist Party of India, which had been founded in 1933.

Mahatma Gandhi stepped up his campaign for British withdrawal and at the beginning of 1944 went on an indefinite hunger strike, thereby provoking a severe crisis for the colonial administration. One of the factors which at that time aroused popular protest was the forced recruitment of Indian citizens for the British army in which they were to defend other British colonies in Asia against the Japanese onslaught.

The repression instituted by the colonial authorities at that time claimed the death of more than 1,000 people. 60,000 people were detained and material losses amounted to

more than £1,000,000. A year later, in December 1945, there was a large-scale revolt in a number of industrial centres, while new peasant uprisings were organized by the Communist Party and the radicals in the National Congress Party, which had proposed to accelerate the overthrow of the colonial rule and not to give time to the Moslem Leauge to realize its demands for the creation of a separate state from the areas with a majority Moslem population.

In the middle of 1946, the British called elections to form a Legislative Assembly in the State of Bengal, which was mostly Moslem and where the religious differences between the Moslems and the Hindu community had increased in recent months. The political tension which prevailed during the elections culminated in one of the greatest massacres in contemporary history.

Reports about the slaughter in the Bengali capital of Calcutta were published by the colonial administration throughout the country and still further intensified the hostility between the two communities. This was the final blow the British dealt to the unification efforts made by the radical wing of the Congress Party under Nehru's leadership.

Thus Britain finally recognized the independence of India in 1948, but it was an India divided into two hostile states, which had little time and resources for putting in jeopardy the other British possessions and interests in the area.

India obtained its independence with grave economic and social problems inherited from the period of British colonial domination. The provisional government, formed on August 15, 1948, was headed by Nehru.

The country was seriously affected by the exodus—in both directions—of more than 15 million people, who moved across the Indian-Pakistani frontier in accordance with their religious beliefs. Moreover, internally, India had to set out on a difficult road in order to bring about economic, social and political progress.

In January 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a fanatic belonging to the ultranationalist organization Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, which served reactionary circles tied to feudal interests.

On January 26, 1950, a constitution was proclaimed which established the secular character of the state, abolished the caste system, and defined India as a union of states and at the same time as a democratic, independent and sovereign republic. In the elections held the following year, the Congress Party won 45% of the vote for the central parliament and 42% of the vote for the state assemblies. Nehru was confirmed as Prime Minister of the Republic of India.

In the economic sphere, the government adopted laws which introduced a limited agrarian reform, and important steps were initiated towards the formation of a state-owned industrial sector.

In the meantime, the differences between the conservative and the radical wings of the Congress Party steadily grew deeper, which obstructed the necessary social changes that should have accompanied the economic measures taken by the government.

Before the death of Nehru in 1964, the government had drawn up three five-year economic plans whose achievement in the development of the material foundations of the country did not improve the living conditions of the population. This was due to the fact that the government officials charged with the implementation of the campaign "against poverty, ignorance and privileges" were subservient to the interests of the landowners and the urban bourgeoisie.

Internationally, the Nehru government adopted a foreign policy of neutrality which ran counter to attempts by the United States to involve other nations in its policy of cold war against the Soviet Union and the socialist camp. This policy pursued by the Indian government became manifest with India's becoming a founding member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

In 1961, India was attacked by troops of the People's Republic of China under the pretext of a frontier dispute, and the Chinese seized some 40,000 sq.km of Indian territory.

When Nehru died in 1964, he was succeeded as Prime Minister by Lal Bahadur Shastri. Two years later, when a second war between India and Pakistan broke out over Kashmir, the Soviet Union intervened as mediator and succeeded in arranging for negotiations between the two belligerent parties.

The first war between India and Pakistan occurred in 1949 over a dispute about Kashmir, a state with a majority Moslem population but whose ruler had opted for union with India at the time of the division of India in 1948.

Shortly after India and Pakistan had signed a peace treaty, Prime Minister Shastri died of a heart attack. He was succeeded by Indira Gandhi, Nehru's daughter, who had gained great political skill as leader of the Congress Party and as a cabinet minister.

When she assumed the leadership of the government on January 18, 1966, Indira Gandhi presented for the first time in the history of the country a programme of socio-economic reforms parallel with consolidation of the development of the state industrial sector which until then had been largely tied to the interests of India's big private capital.

Since the beginning of Indira Gandhi's leadership of the government, contradictions began to grow with the conservative wing of the Congress Party, which held important positions in the cabinet. Within three years, in the middle of 1969, these contradictions produced a crisis and a split in the party, when the conservative group went into opposition under the leadership of Morarji Desai, a former Minister of Economy.

Once the intra-party struggle was over, Indira Gandhi reorganized her cabinet and pursued her programme of reforms, which won the support of the majority of the people in elections held at the beginning of 1971.

In that year India played a decisive role in the struggle for the independence of Bangladesh, the eastern province of Pakistan, by recognizing its government-in-exile and by providing it with military assistance, a move which provoked a third war between India and Pakistan.

Some months after Indira Gandhi's re-election as Prime Minister, India signed a twenty-year treaty of peace, friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, which established the foundations for close relations between the two countries.

Until 1974, Indira Gandhi's government enjoyed popular support for its various progressive measures such as nationalization of the domestic food-grain trade, small redistribution of land in some states, and others, which the wealthy sectors countered with economic sabotage.

Two successive years of bad harvests, drought and floods, increase of prices by big business, and speculation with essential goods, combined with administrative incompetence of some state governments, led to widespread popular discontent, which the reactionary forces exploited against the government.

The political climate gradually worsened until the government proclaimed a state of emergency in the middle of 1975. Under its provisions, many opposition leaders were arrested and 20 extreme-right-wing organizations were banned.

Parallel with its campaign against the reactionary forces under the state of emergency, the government approved a set of important economic measures, including a twenty-point programme designed to improve the lot of the poor and the middle classes. It also launched a broadly based offensive against speculation, smuggling and rising taxes. The national economy began to improve, but the needs of the country were still not satisfied.

In spite of its efforts, the Congress Party government was defeated by the opposition in the elections held in March 1977. The winner was the Janata Front, a coalition made up of the Jana Sangh Party of a nationalist and religious character, which proclaimed the superiority of Hinduism over the other religions in India, the Bharatya Lok Dal Party, which associates the large landowners, the opposition National Congress Party (O), which had left the Indian National Congress Party in 1969, the Socialist Party, which is affiliated to the Second International, and the Congress Party for Democracy, which had split from the Indian National Congress Party during the elections. Morarji Desai took the post of Prime Minister.

The subsequent years were marked by an intensive political struggle in which the ruling coalition tried to liquidate politically Indira Gandhi, depriving her of her parliamentary seat and taking her to court on charges of corruption and abuse of power.

On the other hand, the economic policy pursued by the Desai government, which favoured private capital, worsened the situation of the great masses of the population.

Moreover, there were constant differences between the individual groups making up the Janata coalition. All these factors were being utilized by the National Congress Party (I), which was in active opposition to the government.

In January 1980, the Congress Party candidates swept the elections to the Lower House, winning control of two thirds of the seats. In May of the same year, the Congress Party scored another victory when it won the elections for Legislative Assemblies in eight of the nine states where they were held. This electoral triumph gave the Congress Party control of the Upper House, whereby Indira Gandhi found herself in the position to put forward her government's programme with parliamentary support.

The return to power of Indira Gandhi found an immediate reflection in the re-activation of the outstanding role India has been playing in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and in its support of the national liberation movements as well as of the struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism and apartheid.

These positions were re-asserted at the conference of the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries held in New Delhi in February 1981.

Economy: 65% of the economically active population (i.e. 180,485,000 people according to the 1971 census) work in agriculture, which produces half of the national income.

The main agricultural products are cereals, tea, natural rubber, coffee, cotton, jute, sugar cane, oil seeds, and tobacco. In 1978, cereal production amounted to 119,200,000 tons. In the same year the livestock sector reported 181,651,000 head of cattle, 40,432,000 sheep, 70,704,000 goats, 8,834,000 pigs, 61,043,000 buffaloes, and 144,181,000 poultry. Beef output in that year was 71,000 tons, while the production of buffalo meat was 117,000 tons, mutton 118,000 tons, goat meat 276,000 tons, pork 65,000 tons, and poultry meat 106,000 tons. 2,540,000 tons of fish were netted.

India has the world's fourth largest reserves of coal and possesses large deposits of iron ore, bauxite, titanium, manganese, rare metals, and mica. In 1978, it produced 101,544,000 tons of coal, 3,612,000 tons of lignite, 1,644,000 tons of bauxite, 10,476,000 tons of chromium ore, 420,000 tons of magnesite, 756,000 tons of phosphorite, and 65,592 tons of zinc.

Since independence, India has been implementing a broad and consistent programme of industrialization with large investments by the government in heavy industry. In 1978, India's industrial output included 6,596,000 tons of cane sugar, 4,201,000,000 metres of cotton fabrics, 136,700 stationary Diesel engines, 244,900 sewing machines, 1,844,000 radio receivers, 2,886,000 electric fans, 45,300 passenger cars, 52,000 buses and lorries, 242,000 motorcycles, and 3,500,900 bicycles.

India's balance of trade showed a deficit of 10,820,000,000 rupees in 1979, due to imports to the value of 67,886,000,000 and exports worth 57,066,000,000 rupees.

India's principal commercial partners are the United States, the Soviet Union, Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany. In the period 1979-1980, India received 3,400,000,000 dollars of aid from the World Bank and the OECD.

India's foreign exchange reserves in 1979 amounted to 6,620,000,000 dollars. The national currency is the Indian rupee.

Government: Under the 1950 constitution, India is a sovereign federal republic made up of 22 states—including Sikkim since 1975· which are subordinated to the central government and are administered by local legislative assemblies with greater or lesser autonomy. In addition, there are nine territories directly administered by the central government.

The central government, which has its seat in New Delhi, has the authority to deal with everything concerned with national defence, foreign trade, foreign relations, planning, finance, communications, etc. For their part, the legislative assemblies in the individual states appoint their own ministerial council which is in charge of implementing the national laws enacted by the central government and of drawing up legislation required by the respective state in matters relating to education, commerce, labour, transport, and other areas. The supreme authority in every state is exercised by a governor appointed by the central government.

The parliament has two houses. The Lower, or People's, House (Lok Sabha) has 545 members elected nationally every six years. The Upper House, or the Council of States (Rajya Sabha), has 250 members. Twelve of them are appointed by the central government and the rest are elected every two years by the legislative assemblies of each state.

The President is elected for a term of six years by members of both houses of the central parliament and of the state legislative assemblies. Constitutionally, the President is responsible for everything concerning national defence and also has the authority to proclaim a state of national emergency.

Under the constitution, the Prime Minister is appointed by the President who may also appoint some cabinet ministers. The cabinet is accountable to the lower house of the central parliament. The Prime Minister is, in fact, the leader of the majority in that legislative body.

Armed forces: In 1979, India's armed forces had 1,096,000 men, of whom 950,000 served in the army, 46,000 in the navy, and 100,000 in the air force. The military budget in that year amounted to 27,546,000,000 Indian rupees.

Organizations: There are four large trade union organizations in India, which together associate some 6,000,000 members. They are the All-India Trade Union Congress, led by the Communist Party, the National Trade Union of India, attached to the Congress Party, the Hindi Mazdoor Sabha, and the United Congress of Trade Unions. The most important of the four is the All-India Trade Union Congress which has more than 2,000,000 members. It was founded in 1920 and joined the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) in 1945. Some 2,600 trade unions and guilds are affiliated to it. On the other hand, the National Trade Union of India is a member of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). There are in addition a Confederation of Trade Unions of Central Government Employees and other autonomous unions, the most important of which associates various guilds of railway workers and is led by the Socialist Party.

As regards political parties, the Indian National Congress Party is considered to be the country's most important political force. In August 1974, the rightist politicians established a new party called the Bharatiya Lok Dal. It came into being as a result of the dissolution and merger of seven political parties and groups. Among them only the Swatantra, founded in 1959, was of a nationwide character. The others were small local and regional groups with influence in such states as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. One of the key points in the political platform of those parties, the Swatantra in particular, was to provide facilities for the expansion of local and foreign big business in India.

Another important political force active on the national scale is the Communist Party of India, which was founded on December 26, 1925.

There are two more parties which call themselves Communist—The Communist Party (Marxist), which has considerable influence in the state of West Bengal, and the Communist Party (Marxist-Leninist).

There also exist thirteen other political parties of a reactionary character, including the Jana Sangh, which calls for the supremacy of Hinduism in the country, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam, whose members are mostly landowners and other representatives of the big agrarian bourgeoisie, and the Socialist Party of a moderate rightist trend.

Education: At the present, India has a literate population of some 230,000,000 people, which is 20% higher than that in 1947, when the country became a republic.

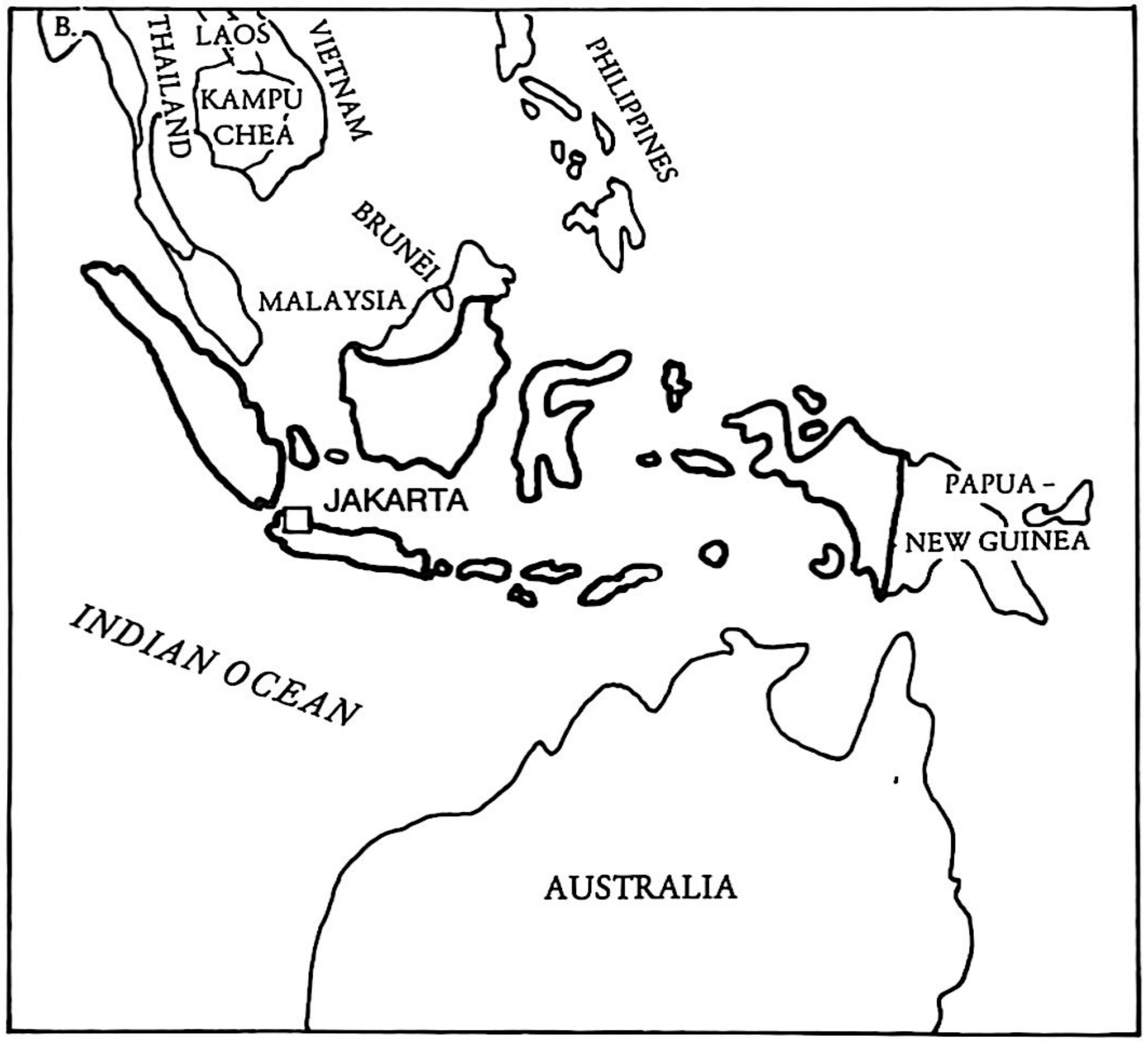
In 1978, India had 444,058 primary schools with 76,236,375 pupils, and 47,148 secondary schools attended by 20,304,094 students. There were 2,064,923 primary-school teachers and 695,102 secondary-school teachers. India has some 20 universities.

Public health: In 1977, India had 5,372 basic public health centres and 37,745 sub-centres in the rural areas. In 1976, there was on the average one doctor per 2,915 inhabitants.

Religion: According to official estimates from 1972, 83.4% of the population are of the Hindu religion, 10% are Moslems, and 2.9% Christians. India is a secular state.

Buddhism, which in the past had been widespread, is at present professed by a small minority of India's population. There also exist other religious cults of lesser importance.

INDONESIA


B.
THAILAND
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PHILIPPINES
BRUNÊI
MALAYSIA
JAKARTA
PAPUA -
NEW GUINEA
INDIAN OCEAN
AUSTRALIA

Official name: Republic of Indonesia.

Area: 2,027,087 sq.km.

Population: 148,470,000 inhabitants. Annual rate of population growth is 2.8%.

Borders: In the east, Indonesia borders on Papua-New Guinea, in the south the nearest land is Australia, in the north there are land frontiers with the Federation of Malaysia (Sabah and Sarawak) and the British protectorate of Brunei, and in the north-west lies the Philippine Archipelago.

Capital: Jakarta (6,000,000 inhabitants).

Principal cities: Surabaya, Bandung, Semarang, Medan. and Palembang.

Languages: Bahasa Indonesia is the official language. However, 25 languages and 250 dialects are spoken in the archipelago.

Public holidays: August 17, Independence Day.

Geography: Indonesia is an archipelago consisting of 3,000 islands, 992 of them inhabited. The westernmost of the islands is Sumatra which is separated from the Malay Peninsula by a strait 84 km wide.

The principal islands are Java, which, together with Madura, a small island lying off its north-eastern coast, has an area of 132,187 sq.km. Sumatra with 473,606 sq.km, Kalimantan (Borneo) with 539,460 sq.km, Sulawesi (Celebes) with 189,216 sq.km, Bali with 5,561 sq.km, Nusa Tenggara (Lesser Sunda) with 68,053 sq.km Maluku (the Moluccas) with 74,505 sq.km, and Irian Jaya (Western New Guinea) with 412,951 sq.km.

Java: It is of volcanic origin and its mountain ranges, rising more than 3,000 m above sea level, include active volcanoes. The northern coast is a fertile alluvial plain. In the interior the land is less fertile but there is petroleum underground. In the south there is a chain of volcanoes whose slopes are terraced for the cultivation of rice. In the high-lying areas there is frequent rainfall due to the dense vegetation. Annual rainfall is 1,000 mm in the north of the island. Java's principal products are rice, sugar cane and nickel.

Sumatra: It lies west of Java. The western part of the island is mountainous with plateaux reaching a height of 1,000 m and volcanoes rising more than 3,400 m above sea level. The active volcanoes include Krakatoa. In the central part there are oil fields as well as cultivated areas where sugar cane and cocoa are mostly produced. In the east, the coast is rather marshy and sparsely settled.

Kalimantan: This island was formerly known as Borneo and lies north of Java. In its northern part are the states of Sabah and Sarawak, belonging to the Federation of Malaysia, and the Sultanate of Brunei. The average elevation of the island is 2,000 m. From the central Tobang Massif rise the Schawai, the Kapuwas and Irian ranges. In the east there are volcanic formations. Kalimantan's main river is the Kapuas which empties into the sea on the western coast. There is rain throughout the year and the island's principal crops are quinine and kapok. There are rich mineral deposits under the ground, in particular petroleum and tin.

Sulawesi: Lying east of Kalimantan, this island is formed by a central nucleus from which protrude four peninsulas, each with its own mountain range. The highest point is in the south—the Lompo-Betrang, 3,070 m in altitude. The extensive coastal plains are suited for pasture. There are also numerous lakes, such as the Towuti, situated 306 m above sea level. The main rivers are the Sedegan-Bahu-Solo, the Ageda ke, and the Balong Nipa, which are navigable over short stretches. In the east there is a volcanic area including the volcanoes Kablat, Seputan and Token.

Sulawesi's main agricultural crops are tea and tobacco, while its mineral resources include manganese and gold.

Bali: This island lies east of Java. Its highest point is the volcano Gunung-Agung, 3,200 m above sea level. The two other major peaks are the Aban and the Bator, 2,200 m and 2,000 m respectively. There are many rivers which help irrigate the rich soil.

Maluku: Situated between Sulawesi and West Irian, the Maluku are a group of small islands, including Sula, Buru, Seram, Obi, Barjam, Kai, Misul and Weda. The main crops are coffee and copra. The Maluku used to be called the Spice Islands because of their production of cloves and nutmeg. The mineral resources include copper and silver.

Irian Jaya: Located in the extreme east of the archipelago, it is separated from the Australian coast by the Arafura Sea, the Torres Strait and the Coral Sea. Two peninsulas —in the northeast and the southeast—project from the large body of the island—New Guinea—whose western part was incorporated into Indonesia in 1963. The highest point on Irian Jaya is located in the Carstensz Mountains, 5,468 m above sea level. The island produces petroleum, copra and nutmeg.

Brief history: The fossil remains of Java Man, who lived half a million years ago, indicate that the islands of Indonesia have been inhabited since the remotest times. However, the actual history of the country dates from the 1st century A.D. when the first merchants reached the islands from India and found there native realms scattered throughout the archipelago. In the 7th century, the Indonesian-Hindu Sriwijaya empire emerged in Sumatra, absorbed the neighbouring Indonesian realms, and became a naval power. In the course of the three centuries of its existence it extended its influence to Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, parts of Indochina and China. Its era was one of Indonesia's cultural splendour.

Around 1377, the Majapahit kingdom, which occupied the southern part of Java and which the Sriwijaya Empire could never subdue, overthrew the latter and turned it into the Majapahit Empire. Eventually it dominated the whole archipelago and for the first time in its history, Indonesia became united under one ruler. The Majapahit Empire was defeated by Moslem Arabs in 1478.

The Portuguese appeared on the scene in 1511, only to be followed by the Spanish, the Dutch, the English, and the French. The fight for the domination of the islands narrowed down to a struggle between the British and the Dutch, who finally prevailed in the 17th century.

The colonization of the islands was initiated by the the Dutch East India Company which controlled their economy until 1800, when the Dutch government took direct control of their administration. Later, in 1811, the British seized and held them for a number of years, but after the Napoleonic wars they returned to Dutch rule in 1816, which was confirmed by the Treaty of Lourdes in 1819.

In the 19th century the people of Indonesia rose in rebellion on a number of occasions, but these uprisings were bloodily suppressed by the Dutch.

The resistance against colonial domination suffered mainly from a lack of cohesion and assumed an organized character only in the first decades of the 20th century. Strikes and demonstrations were frequent until 1927, when a popular revolution broke out, but was crushed by the Dutch with terrible loss of life. In the same year Sukarno founded the National Indonesian Party with a platform of national unity and independence.

In 1942, the Japanese invaded and occupied the Indonesian archipelago. The three years of their stay in the country were marked by monstrous exploitation. The nationalist leaders returned to the islands and pursued a policy of infiltration of the Japanese administration. Sukarno and other prominent Indonesian leaders took the posts offered to them by the invaders and thus were in a position to help the guerillas resisting the occupation.

On August 17, 1945, two days after Japan's surrender, the Republic of Indonesia was proclaimed. However, soon thereafter, British and Dutch troops landed with the objective of preserving colonial rule. Talks between the republican government and the old Dutch colonial officials produced no results, and hostilities broke out. The war, waged under unequal conditions due to the superiority of the Dutch forces and arms, ended in 1949.

On November 27, 1949, Holland recognized the sovereignty of the United States of Indonesia which adopted the system of a federal republic. At the same time a union was formed between the two countries with specific relations in the fields of defence, economy, commerce and foriegn affairs. However, the union did not function in practice and soon thereafter the states which had formed the federation united and established a unitary Indonesian state.

In 1955, the Indonesian government played host to the first Afro-Asian solidarity conference in Bandung, which had a profound impact on the anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples of Asia and Africa.

Later, the young republic had to cope with internal secessionist movements, some of which were encouraged by reactionary forces. Eventually, these movements—mainly in Sulawesi and Sumatra—were suppressed.

With the counter-revolutionary guerillas defeated, Indonesia launched in the period 1960-1961 a drive to reclaim the western part of Irian, the large island in the extreme east of the archipelago, which remained under Dutch rule. In 1963 it was turned over to Indonesia.

After peace and sovereignty had been consolidated throughout the country, the Indonesian government adopted measures aimed at economic emancipation and at transforming the national economy from its dependence on agriculture and mining to an industrial one.

In 1964, the banks were nationalized and, beginning in 1962, a land re-distribution programme was put into effect in order to eliminate the remnants of the large estates.

Notable advances were scored in the cultural sphere, mainly in the fight against illiteracy which at the time when Indonesia had gained independence affected 94% of the population.

At the beginning of 1965 Indonesia left the United Nations in protest against the election of the Federation of Malaysia to the U.N. Security Council, since the Indonesian government claimed that the Federation was an instrument of imperialism in Southeast Asia.

On September 30, 1965, a military movement emerged led by General Untung. After a series of military and political actions, Untung's movement was suppressed and a group of rightist officers, headed by General Nasution, seized actual power in the country. Ignoring President Sukarno's pleas, Nasution unleashed brutal political repression. The Communist Party of Indonesia was outlawed and it is estimated that more than 100,000 militant Communists were murdered at the beginning of 1966.

President Sukarno formally continued to hold power until March 11, 1966, when he was replaced by General Suharto in the midst of serious disturbances provoked by the rightists and on instigation of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency allegedly against opposition to the new military government which had been formed and which initiated a policy of encouraging the influx of foreign capital.

The large transnational corporations from the United States, Western Europe and Japan have made heavy investments in the country and control the exploitation of its principal natural resources.

In July 1971 the government held the first parliamentary elections since 1965 under strict control, and the ruling party won the majority of the seats.

In spite of the radical change in its domestic policy, Indonesia has continued its active participation in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which it is a founding member, and has concerned itself in the United Nations Organization with problems of the developing countries; on the other hand, it has strengthened its relations with the United States and other advanced capitalist countries, including military cooperation.

In 1976, the Jakarta government militarily occupied the Portuguese colony of East Timor, annexed it, and turned it into Indonesia's 27th province.

This step was taken against Resolution 384 (1975) of the U.N. Security Council, which urged Indonesia to withdraw its troops from the former colony and to respect the free choice of its people about their future status.

The conference of the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries held in Belgrade in July 1978, re-affirmed the right of the people of East Timor to self-determination in accordance with the decisions of the Fifth Summit Conference in Colombo. Still later, at the Sixth Summit Conference, held in Havana, this right was once again re-affirmed in conformity with the resolutions adopted on this issue by the U.N. General Assembly and Security Council.

On November 11, 1979 the U.N. General Assembly passed a new resolution demanding the realization of the right of self-determination of the people of East Timor.

Relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands, its former colonial metropolis, seemed to improve in April 1980 with the visit to Indonesia of the Dutch Premier. The ties between the two countries had deteriorated after the nationalization of Dutch interests in Indonesia in the 1950s and as a result of the dispute over Irian. Subsequently, in the second half of 1970, the Dutch parliament criticized the government in Jakarta for the alleged detention of 30,000 political prisoners since the events of 1965, a move which froze still further Dutch-Indonesian relations. For its part, the Indonesian government threatened Holland by demanding its substitution as president of the Intergovernmental Group for Indonesia, a consortium of fourteen countries, set up to channel investments into that Asian country. Finally, the activities of more than 30,000 Moluccans in Holland, who advocate independence for the province of Maluku, was yet another friction point between the two countries.

At the end of 1979, the government in Jakarta announced the release of many political detainees in the province of Maluku, while the Dutch authorities put under firm control Moluccan activities in Holland.

Indonesia is a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC).

Economy: Indonesia's economy is basically agrarian, although only 15,000,000 hectares of the total area of the country are arable. Petroleum plays an important role in the national economy in spite of the fact that its exploitation and sale are in the hands of mainly American and Japanese transnational corporations. In 1971, Indonesia's economically active population numbered 41,261,216 persons, of whom 26,473,477 were employed in agriculture. The main agricultural products reported for 1978 in metric tons included: copra 950,000, maize 2,750,000, soya beans 530,000, rice 25,739,000, coffee 191,000, tea 73,000, unrefined sugar 1,500,000, and rubber 870,000.

As for livestock, the figures for the same year include 6,167,000 head of cattle, and 2,222,000 buffaloes, providing 151,000 tons of meat, 3,710,000 sheep, 7,119,000 goats, and 2,976,000 pigs (10,800,000 tons of meat).

In 1978, mining production included 264,194 tons of coal, 596,700,000 barrels of crude petroleum, 1,007,000 tons of bauxite, 27,489 tons of tin, and 820,000,000 cu.feet of natural gas. In the same year, Indonesia's petroleum refining capacity exceeded 23,000,000 tons, while the output of nickel rose to 1,256,450 metric tons. The per capita gross national product in 1978 was 360 dollars, foreign exchange reserves amounted to 2,663,000,000 dollars, and the balance of trade showed a surplus of almost 5,000,000,000 dollars (11,643,200,000 dollars worth of exports against 6,690,400,000 dollars of imports).

The national budget for the fiscal year 1979-1980 was balanced. Indonesia's main commercial partners are Japan and the United States. Foreign aid and foreign credits to be realized in the period 1979-1983 are estimated at 15,000,000,000 dollars.

Japan absorbs 56% of Indonesia's exports, mainly petroleum, timber, liquefied gas, and shrimps, while 30% of Indonesia's total imports—mostly machinery, steel and chemical products—come from Japan. Japanese interests control 38.7% of all non-mining investments made in Indonesia since 1967, which represent approximately 60% of the 3,100,000,000 dollars of current foreign investments in the textile, automotive, chemical, electronic and other industries.

United States investments in Indonesia amounted to 1,475,000,000 dollars in 1975, of which 1,167,000,000 were in the petroleum industry.

Indonesia's national currency is the rupiah.

Government: The present constitution was adopted in 1945, with a provision regarding "guided democracy" added in 1959. That provision stipulates that "traditional Western democracy shall be applied and adjusted to the intrinsic conditions of the country".

The supreme authority in the state is the Consultative People's Assembly of 920 members. Their term of office is five years. The Assembly is made up of a House of Representatives of 460 members which has a legislative function; 100 members are appointed by the government and 360 are elected by direct vote. The remaining 460 members of the Assembly are all appointed by the government as delegates of Regional Assemblies and representatives of political parties and groups in proportion to the number of their members in the House of Representatives.

The President exercises executive power and is elected by the Assembly for a term of five years. The cabinet ministers are accountable to the President.

There are 27 provinces and local government is exercised through a system of community, regional and provincial assemblies. The provincial governors are appointed by the President.

Armed forces: In 1980, Indonesia's armed forces had a total of 241,800 men of whom 181,000 served in the army, 35,800 in the navy, and 25,000 in the air force.

The military budget for the fiscal year 1980-1981 was 1,300,000,000 rupiahs (i.e. roughly 2,700,000,000 dollars). All the services are placed under the command of the Minister of Defence and Security since 1967, including a Mobile Police Brigade of 12,000 men and a militia of some 100,000 men.

Organizations: At present there are three officially recognized political parties: the Golongan Karya (GOLKAR), the Partai Demokrasi Indonesia (PDI), and the Partai Persatuan Pembangunan (PPP). These three parties competed in the 1977 elections. The Communist Party of Indonesia is outlawed.

Education: Prior to the national liberation war in 1949, 94% of the population were illiterates. Today, that figure has been reduced to 35%.

In 1978, there were 19,000,000 primary school pupils, 3,700,000 students attended secondary schools, and 168,000 students were enrolled in university-level schools.

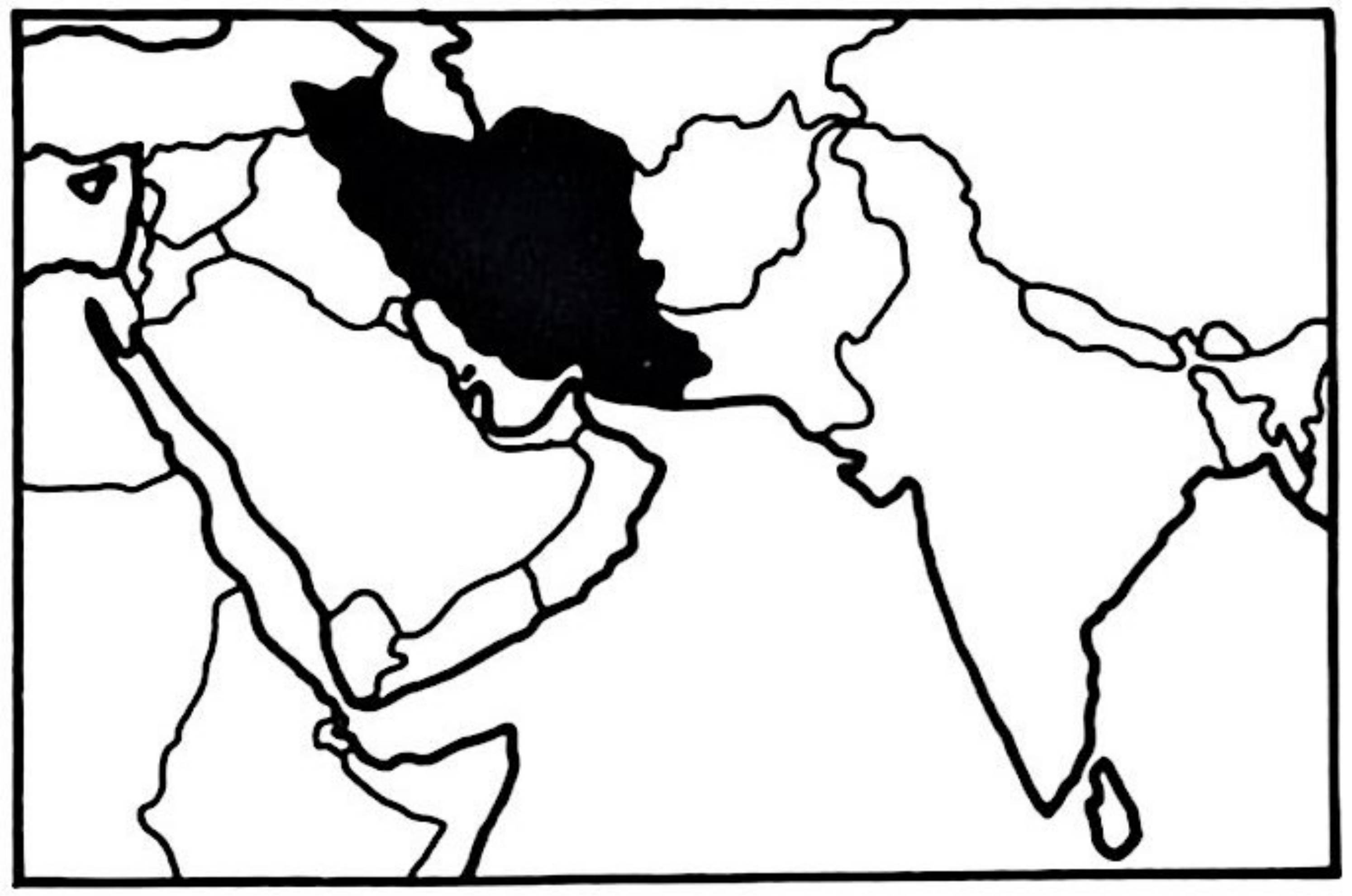
In January 1981, the government banned schools controlled by the ethnic Chinese, of whom there are several million living in Indonesia, and prohibited the importation of all political or educational literature printed in Chinese. In some Indonesian provinces the Chinese population, which is economically strong, is in the majority.

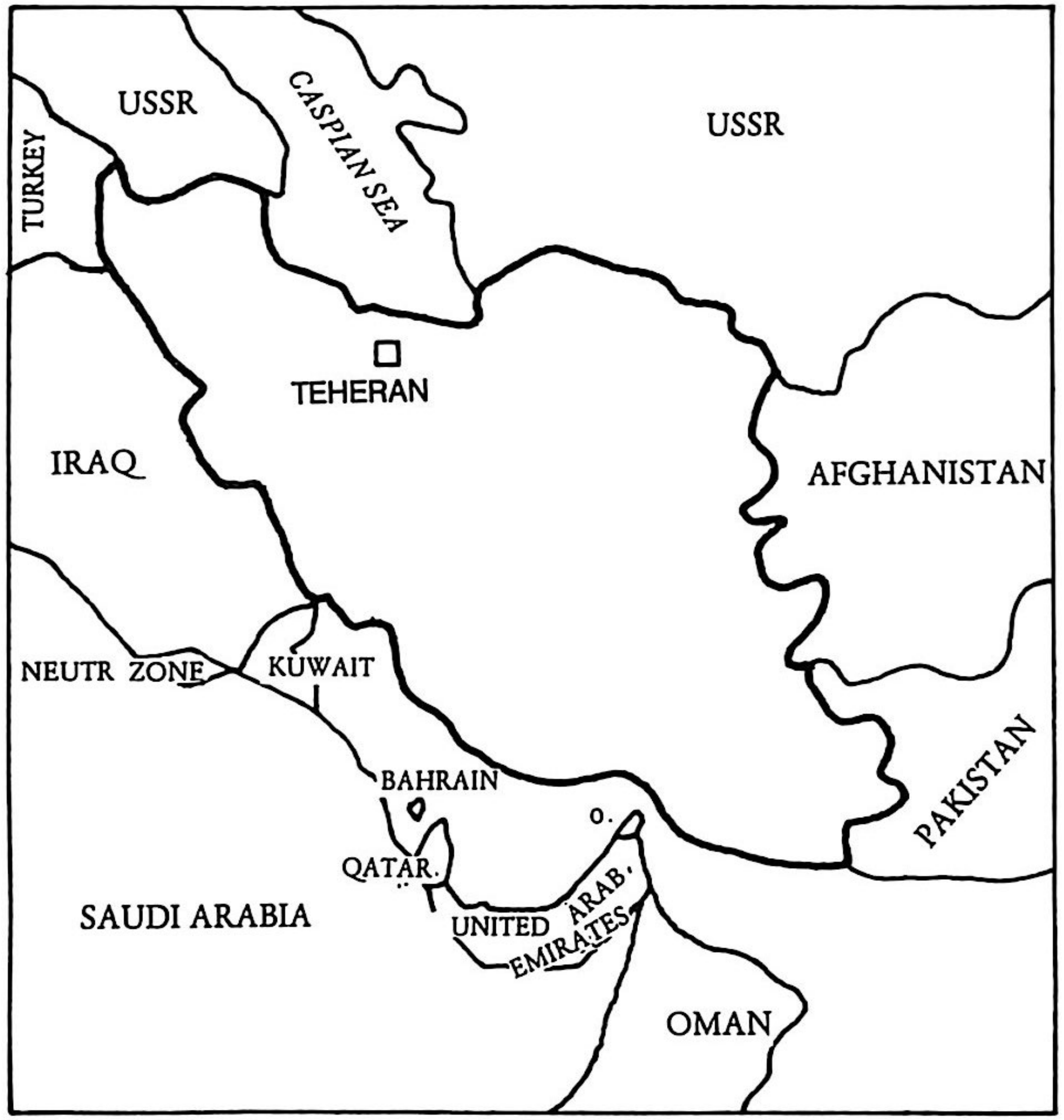
Public health: In 1978, there were 132 large hospitals in Indonesia, operated by the government and in private hands, staffed by 9,805 doctors. Moreover, there are 1,700

public health centres in the country.

Religion: More than 90% of the population are Moslems. There are also Christians and Buddhists.

IRAN

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QATAR.
SAUDI ARABIA
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
OMAN

Official name: The Islamic Republic of Iran.
Area: 1,648,000 sq.km.
Borders: In the north, Iran borders on the Caspian Sea and the Soviet Union, in the east on Afghanistan and Pakistan, in the south on the Arabian-Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, and in the west on Iraq and Turkey.
Population: According to the last census, taken in 1976, Iran had a population of 33,591,785. According to 1978 estimates, the population has passed 35,000,000. Approximately one third of the population lives in urban areas and three to four million people lead a nomadic life. According to 1978 figures, the average density of population is 20.84 per sq.km and the annual rate of population growth is 2.6%.
Capital: Teheran (4,496,159 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Isfahan, Masbad, Tabriz, Shiraz and Ahwaz.
Languages: Farsi, which uses the Arabic script, is the official language. Other languages are also spoken, including Kurdish, Turkoman and Baluchi.
Public holidays: February 11, Victory of the Islamic Revolution (1979).
Geography: From the morphological point of view, Iran is a vast and greatly varied region, even though its most characteristic feature is a large central plateau ranging from 1,000 to 1,500 m in altitude and criss-crossed by a number of mountains ranges of different heights.

The principal range is the Zagros, which runs from the northwest, from a point where the frontiers of Iran, the Soviet Union, Turkey and Iraq converge, first to the western coast of the Arabian-Persian Gulf and then to the east, where it crosses into Baluchistan. This range supplies most of the water available to Iran.

Also in the northwest is the Elburz range with the volcanic cone of Mt. Demavend (5,601 m), Iran's tallest peak. In the east are several mountain ranges of lesser significance, consisting of isolated massifs separated by depressions in some of which there are large lakes. The biggest of these lakes is Hirmand, close to the Afghan frontier.

The central plateau includes large marshy and sandy areas which are sparsely populated. Fertile land is to be found mainly at the foot of the mountain ranges, and it is there where the country's principal crops are grown.

There is considerable volcanic activity in Iran, which produces occasional earthquakes of great intensity.

Because of Iran's large expanse, the climate is marked by extreme variations. The summers seasons, which is short and moderate in the moutains, is extremely hot in the central highlands with temperatures of more than 55°C, some of the highest in the world. These temperatures are influenced by Iran's proximity to the Arabian Peninsula and to the country's own Thar Desert. On the other hand, the winters are harsh because of Iran's high altitude and continental position, so that the temperature drops to minus 30°C in the Zagros range and to minus 20°C in large areas of the interior. In addition, strong winds intensify the variations in temperature. During the summer the east of the country suffers from what is known as "The Wind of the 120 Days", which reaches a velocity of 160 km per hour.

The frequency of rainfall also greatly varies in accordance with the aforesaid regional characteristics. Generally speaking, the country is arid in its central and northern parts. However, in the north, too, the Caspian coast is the only part of Iran with a hot and humid climate, where rainfall averages 2,000 mm in a year.

The population is unequally distributed and its highest concentration is to be found in the coastal area adjacent to the Caspian Sea. Another densely populated area is to be found northeast of the Zagros range, while somewhat less densely populated is the central part of that range. The extreme south and east of Iran are very sparsely populated.

Brief history: The first great Persian empire of Antiquity, founded by Cyrus the Great, dates from the 6th century B.C. Cyrus defeated the Medes and in 533 B.C. consolidated the foundations of a powerful dynasty which extended its realm in the period of its greatest splendour all the way to the north of Africa. In 539 B.C. the Persians conquered Babylonia and in 525 B.C. Egypt. In 490 B.C., Darius, one of the successors of Cyrus, defeated the first Greek invasion. Between 334 and 330 B.C., Alexander the Great defeated the Persian armies, set the capital, Persepolis, afire, and established his rule over all of Asia Minor and Persia.

When Alexander died, Seleuco, one of his generals, established a new empire in 312 B.C., which covered all Persia and a part of old Media, and his dynasty became known as that of the Seleucids. It remained in power until 64 B.C., when it was succeeded by the Arsacids, a dynasty of Parthian origin. The Parthians had rebelled against the Seleucids.

In 226 A.D. the Parthian kingdom was incorporated in a new Persian empire established by the Sassanids who strongly reacted to the earlier Hellenistic influences. The Sassanids were of Farsi origin and re-established Zorastrianism as the state religion, as well as a stronly centralized government.

Similarly as their Parthian predecessors, the Sassanids had to combat nomadic peoples invading their realm from Central Asia and also had to face the strong influence wielded along the western frontiers of their empire by the Byzantines.

The Sassanid empire reached its zenth under Anushiravan (531-579 A.D.), but after his death it rapidly declined. The Persian weakness became evident somewhat later with the beginning of the Arab conquest which sparked the expansion of Islam in the 7th century. The victory of the Islamic armies in the decisive battles at Qadisiya (637) and Nihavand (641) determined the future of Persian territory.

The gradual incorporation of the Sassanid dominions in the Ommiad empire (661-750) was spurred by the transfer of the capital of the Islamic realm to Baghdad, the centre of the Abbasside caliphs (750-1258). It was then when Islam spread throughout the country to preserve its influence among the Iranian population to this day.

After having attained the period of its maximum splendour in the 8th and 9th centuries, when Persian influence played an important role, the Abbasside empire visibly declined. Between the 9th and 11th centuries, Persia was dominated by a number of local dynasties which were independent of or only partially dependent on the central power, a fact that was a clear sign of the Abbasside decline.

At the same time, decisive changes occurred in the cultural area. The Arab script began to be used in the 10th century and many Arabic words were adopted as the Arabic language spread due to the consolidation of Islam as the prevalent religion in the country.

In 1040, the Oghuz Turks, who had been threatening Persia since the beginning of the 11th century, triumphed in the battle of Dendeqan and extended their dominion over the entire eastern part of the caliphate. The most outstanding among the new invaders were the Seljuks, who succeeded in gaining domination of a vast territory extending from Central Asia to the Mediterranean coast. Seljuk rule brought about major changes in the organization of society and in land tenure in particular at a time when new ethnic elements contributed to the formation of the Iranian people.

In 1153, the last of the Great Seljuks, Sanjar, was toppled by new Oghuz invasions from Central Asia, and his empire broke down into a number of small states.

In the next century, a new wave of invaders--the Mongols reached Iran from Central Asia. For many years, Persia was governed by the Ilkhan dynasty, founded by Hulagu, a grandson of Gengiz Khan, as a dependency of the Great Khan. In 1265 it became an independent dynasty whose rule lasted until the 14th century. At the end of that century

Persia was conquered by Timur, whose empire spread all the way to Iraq and had its centre in Samarkand.

At the beginning of the 16th century, the Saffavids, a dynasty originating from a religious order in the north of the country, consolidated its power, and for the first time in the era of Islamic domination established by the early caliphates Persia regained political unity.

With the Saffavids in power, Shiism, which had already demonstrated its mobilizing power among the local population against Semitic rule, became the dominant branch of Islam in Persia. The first Saffavid monarch, Ismail (1502-1524), fought the Ottoman Turks, spurred by the powerful Shiite sentiments prevailing among the population. The Saffavid empire reached its apex under Shah Abbas (1587-1629), when contacts with Europe increased and the country enjoyed a period of maximum political and commercial power.

The Saffavid dynasty was overthrown by Afghan rebels (1721-1730) who, in turn, were brought down by Nadir Shah Afshar (1735-1747). The dynasty founded by Afshar was succeeded by the Zands and then the Kajars, whose first sovereign was Aqa Mohammed (1779-1797).

The Kajar dynasty, which moved the capital from Isfahan to Teheran, ruled for a long time—until 1925, when it was overthrown. Its rule was characterized by growing interference on the part of the European powers in Iran's affairs, motivated by strategic reasons or by efforts to exploit the country's natural resources.

The British sent their first ambassador to the rulers of Persia in 1561 and established their permanent presence in the Arabian-Persian Gulf in 1613. From then on they exercised a decisive influence in that area, based on colonial ties with the local sheiks and on exploitation of local rivalries.

Later on, when the British established themselves in India, the territory of Iran became of ever greater interest to the British Crown. The greatest British rivals at that time were the French who had maintained commercial relations with Mesopotamia and Persia since 1796. but there were also conflicts of interest with tsarist Russia, which maintained and developed intensive commercial and economic activity in Iran's northern provinces.

In 1800 an envoy of the British Governor-General in India concluded a political and commercial treaty with Persia, motivated basically by the British desire to counter French influence in the country. Napoleon's defeat in Egypt, however, eased that danger and the treaty was not ratified. On the contrary, some years later, France proposed the formation of an alliance with Persia for the purpose of confronting Russia, which led to the signing of the Finkestein Treaty in 1807. That document provided for the posting of a French military mission in the Persian capital, which was followed by a British mission in 1808.

The Treaty of Teheran, concluded in 1814, granted Britain a privileged military position on Persian territory.

Rivalries between Persia and the neighbouring countries led to confrontations with Russia from 1801 to 1825, which were terminated under the Treaty of Turkomanchai, signed in 1828. There were also hostilities with Turkey in 1821, due to frontier disputes.

1856 and 1857 saw the Anglo-Persian War, which produced the first British armed intervention in Persia and which ended in the latter year under the Treaty of Paris.

The second half of the 19th century, although less eventful from the military point of view, was as disastrous as the first one for Persia due to the consolidation of colonial interests within its frontiers. In 1872 the notorious Reuters Concession was signed, which put in British hands for a term of seventy years a monopoly on the operation of all railways and trams in the country, the exploitation of all minerals except gold, silver and precious stones, and the control of all works relating to irrigation projects, road building, industrial construction and the telephone service.

The granting of another scandalous concession—the tobacco monopoly—to Talbot, a British national in 1890 produced widespread popular protests led by the Shiite clergy, which forced the cancellation of the monopoly in 1891.

In 1899 the Belgians took over Persia's customs administration, and two years later events took place which put completely into foreign hands the country's principal wealth petroleum. An Englishman, William Knox D'Arcy, succeeded in winning the Shah's favours and the latter granted to him and "all his collaborators, descendants, friends and heirs" in view of D'Arcy's "extraordinary merits" in promoting friendship between Great Britain and Persia, "the unlimited right for a term of sixty years to carry out geological survey and exploitation throughout the territory of Persia as he may wish, with whatever minerals he may discover becoming the absolute property of D'Arcy". In the hands of the British Admiralty, this document became the basis for a future concession agreement signed in 1909, following the discovery of vast petroleum resources, which gave the British control of Iranian petroleum wealth until 1953.

At the beginning of this century, there was considerable opposition within the country against the scandalous concessions and the economic privileges granted to foreign capital, against the extravagance of the imperial court, and against the restrictions placed on political liberties. A new opposition emerged in 1905, which demanded constitutional reforms and which joined in the great nationalistic wave that was sweeping Asia and parts of the Middle East.

After many popular demonstrations in the capital and the seizure of the British Embassy, a new constitution was proclaimed in 1906, as well as the formation of a new government, which, however, remained in power less than four years.

In 1907 Britain and tsarist Russia signed the Anglo-Russian Convention which established zones of influence for the two powers on Iranian territory and a neutral zone between them.

When World War I broke out in 1914, Persia formally proclaimed its neutrality, although troops of several belligerent countries held positions inside the country. When the October Revolution of 1917 prevailed, the Russian forces stationed in Persia withdrew and the Bolshevik government denounced all the treaties concluded between tsarist Russia and the neighbouring country. A new type of international convention, the Soviet-Iranian Treaty, was signed in 1921, confirming the Soviet renunciation of the former concessions obtained by the tsarist regime and cancelling Iranian debts to Russia. This treaty was ratified by the Mejlis, the lower house of the Iranian parliament, which, on the other hand, refused to approve the Anglo-Iranian agreement of 1919, providing for the dispatch to Iran of British advisers and officials and conceding to Britain a certain degree of control of public administration, which was being justly interpreted as an intention to establish a protectorate over the country, exploiting the situation created there at the end of World War I.

In the years that followed, a revolutionary movement emerged in the north of the country which proclaimed a Gilan Republic but which was forcibly suppressed in 1921. A year earlier, the Social Democratic Party—Edelet—had announced its transformation into a Communist Party.

A coup carried out in Feburary 1921 brought to the fore of the country's political life Reza Khan, an officer of the Cossack Brigade, who had rapidly risen through the ranks from a subaltern officer to colonel. Reza Khan proclaimed himself Minister of War and supreme commander of the armed froces, and began to build a highly centralized government supported by the armed forces, which under his command gained in effectiveness. In 1923 he assumed the premiership and in October 1925, the Mejlis, acting under his pressure, voted to depose Ahmad Shah Kajar, the last ruler of his dynasty.

With the Kajar dynasty out, Reza Khan crowned himself Shah and adopted the name Pahlavi—an ancient Persian language—for his own dynasty.

The new Shah made use of an intensive campaign of nationalism as the ideological foundation of his spurious power, claiming to be the heir of the glorious past of Persia of Cyrus and Xerxes, and proclaiming the royal origin of his dubious lineage. In order to secure his realm, the new monarch introduced a number of reforms accompanied by severe repressive measures. The different migratory tribes were forced to settle down, which greatly changed their traditional way of life, obligatory military service was decreed and the army was doubled in size, the educational system was reorganized according to Western patterns, and the country's system of communications was improved by the establishment of a railway network, but this did not greatly spur economic development.

Between 1932 and 1933 Reza Khan obtained a somewhat more favourable agreement with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company which, nevertheless continued enjoying immense privileges, unparalleled by those obtained by British petroleum companies in other countries of the Persian Gulf area.

In 1935 the new Shah changed the name of the country to Iran. With its accession to power, the royal family accumulated a fabulous fortune from public funds, confiscation of vast tracts of land through accusation of its owners of political crimes or by simple coercion, and by other means.

In its relations with its neighbours in the Gulf area, the Pahlavi dynasty revived Iran's claims to Bahrein, a small group of islands to which Iranis had been banished by the Al-Khalifa family in 1783. The dispute marked the beginning of tense relations between Iran and the Arab countries in the area and, in particular, of rivalry with Saudi Arabia, which became quite acute in the subsequent decades.

During the first years of Reza Khan's rule, British influence in the country, particularly manifested in British control of Iran's petroleum wealth, did not cease growing, but this did not prevent Iran from proclaiming its neutrality when World War II broke out and when the Shah's sympathies obviously rested with the Axis powers.

In 1941, the Allies demanded that Reza Khan reduce the number of Germans living in Iran but the Shah refused to do so. Therefore, in view of the evident danger posed by the strengthening of the fascist positions in the country, Allied forces entered Iran on August 26 of the same year. On September 16 Reza Khan abdicated in favour of his son Mohammed Reza who was then 23 years old. The removal of the Shah, who later died in exile in South Africa, was received with satisfaction by the Iranian people.

The Iranian government then broke off relations with Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, and later also with Japan. In September 1943 it declared war on Germany and joined the United Nations Organization.

In December 1943, the Teheran Conference took place and ended with the signing of the Declaration of Teheran, whereby the Allied powers guaranteed the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iran. The conference at the same time re-affirmed the terms of a tripartite treaty concluded the year before by Iran, the Soviet Union and Great Britain, under which the two latter countries had the right to maintain their military presence on Iranian territory during the war and would provide the Teheran government with assistance in the case of external aggression.

As the war continued, it brought to Iran a large contingent of American troops which numbered more than 30,000 when the conflict ended. It was then when the government of Mohammed Reza Pahlavi began to favour very strongly Washington's interests, which characterized its stance in subsequent decades. The first American advisers arrived in Teheran in 1942, among them General Ridley, who was to head a milltary mission, and Colonel H. Norman Schwarzkopf, who was to reorganize the Shah's police and would play a major role in the future repression of the post-war nationalist movements. In 1943 an American adviser took over Iran's General Fiscal Administration.

In 1947 the Truman Doctrine was extended from Greece and Turkey to Iran, and in October of that year Iran and the United States signed an agreement providing for the establishment of an American military mission in the country for the purpose of "improving the efficiency of the Iranian army". One of the provisions of that document stipulated that military experts from other countries could not lend their services to Iran without U.S. consent.

The growing foreign military presence in the country and the scandalous exploitation of Iran's petroleum wealth by foreign monopolies were two major factors which provoked in the early 1950s the upsurge of a strong anti-imperialist movement which did not remain limited to Iran only and which was the first antecedent of the great nationalistic wave that once again swept the Middle East shortly thereafter.

In 1949, following the proclamation of a new constitution which produced no significant changes in Iran's political structure, and after an abortive assassination attempt against the Shah at Teheran University—which provided an excuse for stepped-up repression of progressive political movements, including the Tudeh Party, the successor of the Communist Party of Iran—a Supplementary Agreement was signed with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, as a result of a unanimous condemnation of the old agreement by public opinion.

In the autumn of the same year, a group of political personalities demanded that the government stop its pressure tactics in favour of its candidates in the elections to the Mejlis, called for the next October. The group was headed by Mohammed Mossadegh, who represented the national bourgeoisie and an important current of public opinion opposed to the plunder of the national wealth by foreign monopolies.

Together with their demands for free elections, freedom of the press and lifting of the state of emergency imposed after the attempt to assassinate the Shah in February 1949, Mossadegh's followers founded a National Front which swept the elections to the Mejlis.

The new political organization raised as its primary task the recovery of the petroleum wealth from the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. That company held an almost absolute monopoly on Iranian petroleum which then accounted for half of the total Middle East petroleum output. In the middle of this century it earned Great Britain, which held 59% of the company's shares, more than 800,000,000 prounds in profit, that is twenty-five times higher than the taxes it paid to the Iranian treasury. The plunder of Iranian petroleum amounted to more than 320,000,000 tons between 1914 and 1950. The last basic agreement on petroleum exploitation, signed in 1933, consolidated the company's power and control of Iranian petroleum until 1993. Besides its concessions for petroleum prospecting, which covered and area of 259,000 sq.km, the Anglo-Iranian Company owned refineries at Abadan, more than 2,700 km of pipelines, 100 large tankers, some 10,000 lorries, private airfields, radio stations, railways and a private police force.

In order to counter the strong nationalist trends, the Shah appointed in the middle of 1950 General Ali Razmara, known for his pro-British sentiments, as Premier. Razmara failed in negotiating a loan from the United States which was not happy about his pro-British inclination. Under popular pressure, talks opened with the Soviet Union on the re-establishment of trade, which had been suspended under American pressure. A commertion, aggravated by the obvious influence of the United States on the Premier, who aroused popular antipathy.

Within a short period of time, the contradictions between the Amini government and the National Front, which in spite of its prohibition continued to be an important political force, grew from bad to worse. In January 1962 repressive measures were taken against university students. Finally, after disputes with the armed forces and disturbances in Teheran, Amini resigned in July 1962.

His successor Assadollah Alam, a large estate owner of strong pro-Western sentiments, assumed power with the promise of restoring the suspended parliamentary system and thus to placate the official political parties. Alam, who was also a close personal friend of the Shah, enjoyed many prerogatives compared with his predecessors. In November 1962, after an attempt to postpone the promised elections, they were called for the next spring. Meanwhile, a pronounced polarization of opinion emerged with respect to the agrarian reform and methods of its implementation, as well as to a planned referendum which was to support other important changes, including the sale of state-owned industries, which the new government was proposing.

The opposition to the referendum which was to establish the basis for the "White Revolution" proclaimed by the Shah as the objective of his government in January 1963, continued to grow among different strata of the population, ranging from the National Front to the Shiite clergy. The demagogical nature of the proposed reforms stands out when the results of the agrarian reform are analyzed; it did not effectively distribute land among the poor peasants, just as a literacy campaign, one of the measures designed to placate popular demands, in the end failed to eliminate illiteracy among more than a half of Iran's population.

The wave of protests continued to rise even after the referendum, whose results (99.9% of the votes cast in favour of the monarchy according to official figures) were widely disputed by the opposition. Between May and June 1965, the role of the Shiite leadership in opposing the Shah's measures grew in importance. The arrest of Ayatollah Ruollah Khomeini and several dozen other religious dignitaries provoked disturbances in Teheran, which spread to Meshed, Tabriz, Qom, Shiraz and Isfahan, and which were ruthlessly suppressed. A number of individuals accused of instigating the protests were shot in November of the same year.

The elections promised by Premier Alam finally took place in September 1963, but were boycotted by the National Front, the Tudeh Party and other opposition forces. All the candidates standing for election had been approved by the government in advance.

In March 1964, Alam was replaced by Hassan Ali Mansour who headed Iran Novi, a political party in the government coalition, from which position he disputed Alam's authority in the parliament and eventually succeeded in forcing his resignation. The new Premier pursued in substance the reform programme of the "White Revolution", which was officially continued until the beginning of the 1970s with the help of the steadily growing, immense income from Iran's petroleum resources which then fired the country's economy. Nevertheless, the reforms did not really change the living conditions or make the broad masses of the population share in the petroleum profits.

One of the measures approved under the Mansour government granted penal jurisdiction over American troops stationed in Iran to American courts. This move caused certain debate in the Mejlis but was finally put into effect.

Under the Mansour government, too, repression of the opposition political organizations was stepped up. In 1964, Ayatollah Khomeini was again arrested because he openly condemned the law granting immunity from Iranian jurisdiction to American troops stationed on Iranian territory.

In the economic sphere, the income derived from petroleum exports permitted the government to expand the third development plan from 145 to 200 billion rials.

On January 21, 1965, the Premier was assassinated allegedly by members of the organizion Fedayeen-i-Islam, four members of which were shot after having been charged with the killing. In April of the same year the government announced that an attempt had been made to kill the Shah and accused, among others, Communist militants of the abortive assassination. This charge was used to justify a new wave of repression of the Tudeh Party and other opposition forces.

Mansour's death marked the beginning of a long period in which the premiership was held by Amir Abbas Hoveida who had been Finance Minister in the Mansour government and the second most powerful figure in the Iran Novi. The new Premier was a close associate of the Shah and the future architect of the monarch's economic policy.

The Hoveida government lasted until 1977, when it was replaced by a cabinet headed by Jamshid Amouzegar. Earlier, it had formally won the elections in 1967, 1971 and 1975, all held under firm police control and without any guarantees to the real opposition to the monarchy.

At the beginning of the period of the Hoveida government, measures were taken to guarantee the succession of the Pahlavi dynasty by designating the Queen as the automatic regent in the case of the Shah's death. Anxious to secure the continuity of his dynasty and the monarchy, the Shah married Farah Diva in 1959, following two earlier marriages which had failed to produce a male heir to the throne.

At the same time, after the overthrow of Mossadegh and with the growing wealth derived from petroleum profits, the royal family created instruments for the systematic plunder of public funds. Thus, the Pahlavi Foundation was established in 1958, allegedly for beneficial purposes, and in 1961 the Pahlavi Dynasty Fund. Both institutions made possible the accumulation of a fabulous personal fortune not only by the sovereign but also by many members of the royal family.

In 1977 the personal wealth of the Shah abroad was estimated at some 26,000,000 dollars, and it was also suspected that more than half of the 4,000,000,000 dollars transferred from Iran to the United States between 1975 and 1977 belonged to the monarch in addition to his shares in at least 150 large enterprises of all kinds both in Iran and abroad.

In 1967, 26 years after his succession to the throne, the Shah had himself crowned and also crowned his wife as Empress. The coronation ceremony, held with a pomp appropriate to the monarch's ambitions, was designed to re-affirm the legitmacy of his non-existent royal lineage and to proclaim the victory of his "White Revolution".

The power position of Iran in the Middle East was increasingly characterized, parallel with the growth of its arms-purchasing capacity due to the vast petroleum income, as that of the favourite ally of the United States in the area.

Since 1960, when he broke off relations with Gamal Abdel Nasser's Egypt, Reza Pahlavi presented himself as a resolute opponent of nationalist movements in the Middle East, and at the same time he was involved in certain rivalry with Saudi Arabia for hegemony in the Gulf area.

Iran's ties with Turkey and Pakistan became closer in 1964, following talks in Istanbul where a Regional Cooperation and Development Organization was set up.

In 1965 King Faisal of Saudi Arabia visited Teheran and agreed on delineation of the continental shelf between both Gulf countries, which, however, the Mejlis did not ratify because it was felt to be favourable to Saudi interests. The treaty was concluded three cial treaty was concluded in November 1950. In the same month, the Petroleum Commission of the National Assembly recommended abrogation of the Supplementary Agreement signed with the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company two years earlier.

On January 11, 1951, the Mejlis abrogated the agreement, whereupon the National Front urged the abolition of the concessions, in which it was supported by the Moslem clergy.

Meanwhile, Premier Razmara found himself in serious conflict with the United States, for which he blamed the decision of the Mejlis, unfavourable to British interests. In fact, however, Washington wanted to fish in muddy waters and to capitalize on the popular demand for nationalization of the petroleum resources with the hope that it would replace Britain in controlling that Iranian wealth.

Razmara demanded the recall of the American economic advisers working in Iran, and himself recalled Iranian officers receiving military training in the United States.

On March 7, 1951, the Premier was assassinated as he was leaving a Teheran mosque. His death was officially attributed to a religious fanatic. Four days later, Hussein Ala, Iran's former ambassador in Washington, was appointed to head the government and he included in his cabinet General Fazlollah Zahedi, the future head of the reactionary forces in the country.

Hussein Ala proposed to crush the popular movement and to reach agreement with Washington and London. Popular demonstrations were banned and a state of emergency was proclaimed once again.

On March 15, 1951, the Mejlis unanimously voted in favour of the National Front proposal to nationalize Iran's petroleum. The Senate followed suit five days later. The proposed law provided for state ownership of the vast properties of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, guaranteed supply of crude oil to the old clients of that company, and set compensation to the monopoly.

The company responded to the parliamentary decision by shutting off some wells, alleging a lack of spare parts. At the end of March, after the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company stopped paying subsidies to which it had been obligated under its earlier contracts, strikes were called in its different facilities and installations. The Hussein Ala government sent troops to Abadan and other petroleum-producing areas, and savagely suppressed the protests.

On April 26, 1951, the Petroleum Commission of the Mejlis approved the petroleum nationalization law. The next day the Hussein Ala government resigned. On the 28th, the parliament unanimously passed the law, which consequently went into effect. On April 29 Mohammed Mossadegh, the new Premier, took his office.

The British government responded by sending a number of warships to the Arabian-Persian Gulf, by dispatching its troops to Iraq close to the Iranian frontier and by placing an embargo on British goods destined for Iran. Moreover, a petition was filed with the International Court in The Hague, claiming the validity of the concessions granted to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company until 1993. Subsequently, the conflict was submitted to the U.N. Security Council, which decided in October 1951 to wait for the opinion of the International Court in The Hague. The British proposal raised in the Security Council with American support actually followed the objective of forming an international (Anglo-American) company which would exploit Iranian petroleum. The Mossadegh government rejected this idea and was supported in the Security Council by the Soviet delegation. The International Court finally issued its opinion in July 1952, which stipulated that the 1933 agreement between the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company and the government of Iran excluded the British government as a party to the dispute, and confirmed the position of the Iranian government in the conflict.

In July of that year, American involvement in the Iranian events became quite evident. President Truman's special envoy, William Averell Harriman arrived in Teheran allegedly to mediate in the conflict. He was met by huge popular demonstrations against his presence, which indicated the massive Iranian rejection of his mission which involved an offer of his offices as an intermediary between the Iranian government and a British delegation.

The negotiations broke down due to the British and American insistence on conceding to Iran the formal possession of the petroleum resources, but preserving to the monopolies the prospecting for and exploitation, refining and sale of the petroleum with American participation.

In this first stage of the dispute between Britain and Iran Washington maintained the appearance of conciliation while seeking to improve its own interests even to the detriment of its British allies.

In October 1950 the so-called Point Four Programme had been extended by the Truman administration to Iran. In the same year a new military agreement signed with the United States called for "mutual assistance in matters of defence" and provided for the presence of scores of American advisers in the Iranian army, police and other forces. The Pentagon viewed Iran as a strategic area for the domination of the Middle East and attached special attention to all of Iran's regions adjacent to its frontier with the Soviet Union.

There was also U.S. capital involved in Iran. Standard Oil of New Jersey helped and financed the American economic advisers who drew up the first Iranian seven-year development plan.

When the attempts to temper the Iranian decision to nationalize the petroleum resources of the country had failed, the United States and Great Britain declared an economic boycott of Iran. With the active cooperation of the multinational petroleum corporations the oil market was closed to Iranian crude, causing an economic collapse which the Mossadegh government could not contain.

In 1952 the Premier demanded from the Shah extraordinary powers for a term of six months, as well as the defence portfolio, both of which the imperial court denied him. Mossadegh submitted his resignation on July 16 of that year, and Chavam es Sultaneh was appointed to succeed him. On July 21 a general strike in the capital grew into a popular uprising and the army refused to suppress the masses of the demonstrators. The Shah was forced to offer the premiership once again to Mossadegh together with the defence post which he had refused him earlier.

In February 1953 Dwight David Eisenhower became President of the United States. He had closer ties with the petroleum monopolies, in particular the Rockefeller family, than his Democratic predecessor.

On February 28 Mossadegh accused the Shah of working for foreign interests, which brought into the open the imminent outbreak of a crisis between the Premier ratified in his post by the parliament for a new term of one year, and the imperial court with the Pahlavi dynasty which was quite obviously supported by the United States.

In March, Kermit Roosevelt, an official of the CIA and grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt, arrived in Teheran in order to finalize the details of the overthrow of the Premier. The operation, code-named "Ajax", served as a model for similar operations carried out by the CIA in different parts of the world in subsequent years.

Actively involved in the plot was Brigadier General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, known to the Iranian military as the man who some years earlier had organized the Shah's police.

On July 19, Mossadegh dissolved the Mejlis and called elections for August 4, in which he won an overwhelming majority. On August 11, the Shah moved to a holiday retreat on the Caspian Sea, from where he announced the appointment of General Fazlollah Zahedi to replace Mossadegh. The coup was planned for August 15, but was foiled by forces loyal to Mossadegh. The Shah immediately left the country and fled to Rome where he waited for another coup attempt, which took place almost immediately, led by General Zahedi with ample financial and organizational American assistance.

The Mossadegh government was overthrown in the midst of disturbances on August 20, and the Shah immediately appointed Zahedi as Premier. The latter accomplished the objective of his appointment with full-scale repression of the progressive forces, the imprisonment of Mossadegh, and the redistribution of the petroleum wealth among the powerful transnationals. The Anglo-Iranian Oil Company ceded 60% of its shares, which were divided between Gulf Oil, Standard Oil of New Jersey, Standard Oil of California, Texaco, and the Socony-Vacuum Mobil Oil corporations. A smaller part of the shares was sold to British Petroleum and to the Compagnie Francaise de Petroles. It was this enlarged international consortium which in the future controlled Iranian petroleum in place of the old British monopoly.

After the fall of Mossadegh all political activity was suppressed and strict press censorship was instituted. The National Front had to cease functioning as an organized political party, and the Tudeh Party was one of the organizations most severely affected by the ever-growing repression—a characteristic feature of Iranian political life over the decades to follow. Some studies of Iranian history describe the period between 1953 and 1960 as being characterized by government instability and massive American aid.

This American penetration was most obvious in the area of military cooperation. In 1954, Iran joined the Baghdad Pact—later converted into the Central Treaty Organization —which in that era represented the principal product of American-British military coordination in the region concerned, directly aimed against the Soviet Union and inspired by the idea to consolidate Washington's control of the petroleum resources in the Middle East.

Iran's participation in the Baghdad Pact moreover contributed to a marked intensification of internal repression. During the period in question, U.S. assistance to Iran permitted the Shah to expand his army from 120,000 to 190,000 men, while the Iranian air force grew from nothing to 8,000 men, similarly the navy, which had been practically nonexistent at the beginning of the 1950s, but in 1960 had a force of 4,000 men. Military expenditure grew from 2,500,000,000 rials in the fiscal year 1953-1954 to 14,200,000,000 in the year 1961-1962, and in the fiscal year 1966-1967 amounted to 23,900,000,000 rials.

One of the preferential tasks in this sphere was the training of Iranian military officers in the United States. According to some estimates, more than 2,000 men had been trained there between 1950 and 1965.

The general endeavour of the United States to strengthen the Iranian armed forces beyond any reasonable proportion may be judged from the fact that between 1946 and 1970 the government in Teheran received more than 1,365,000,000 dollars in American military aid; this figure includes different typss of direct assistance and credit, and represents approximately 7% of the total military aid provided by Washington to other countries in that period.

The secret organization which seized political control of Teheran following the coup against Mossadegh, the Farmandar-i-Nizami, was replaced in 1956 by the notorious secret police, SAVAK, which from its very establishment had been getting substantial technical assistance from the United States.

The repression which followed the installation in office of Premier Zahedi was first turned against the followers of the deposed ex-Premier Mossadegh, including members of some tribes opposed to the monarchy, and was concentrated especially against members of the banned Tudeh Party.

In January 1954, fifty Tudeh members were arrested on charges of conspiring to assassinate the Shah, and later some members of the armed forces were again accused of anti-government activities. In 1955 new demonstrations of popular discontent took place and in the same year Premier Zahedi was replaced by Hussein Ala.

After the appointment of Ala, a resolute advocate of royal authority, governmental power was concentrated in the Shah's hands, and the monarch began to play a much more active role in government affairs. This trend further increased under the subsequent Premiers—Manuchechr Eqbal (1957-1960) and Jafar Sharif-Emami (1960-1961). Steps were taken to ensure that in the elections to the Mejlis, held in 1954 and in 1956 (when that body's term of office was extended from two to four years), only individuals known to be loyal to the imperial regime would be elected and would occupy a seat in the parliament.

Relations with Great Britain, which had been broken off earlier, were re-established in 1954 in a move fully consistent with the completely pro-Western orientation of Iran, that led to the already mentioned accession to the Baghdad Pact, an alliance quite obviously directed against the Soviet Union.

In spite of this situation and Soviet admonitions about the bellicose course of Iranian policy, relations between the two countries were favourably affected by the re-activation between 1955 and 1957 of a joint commission charged with the demarcation of the Soviet-Iranian frontier, whose final protocol was signed in April 1957.

Under Eqbal's premiership, an artificial two-party system was created and elections were held in 1960, which were denounced by the real opposition because of their obviously fraudulent character.

In the preceding year, as yet another sign of Iran's policy of military ties with the United States, an Iranian-Turkish agreement on military cooperation was signed in Ankara, which further strengthened the already close relations existing between the two countries and was designed to bolster Iran as a champion of the "Eisenhower Doctrine" then applied to the area, of which the other resolute advocate, relied upon by the United States, was Saudi Arabia.

The scandal about the two-party system, in fact a division into two equal parts of politicians dependent on the monarch, broke into the open after the elections called and manipulated by Eqbal. The Shah had to cancel the results of these elections and appointed as the new Premier Jafar Sharif-Emami who formed a new cabinet and called new elections for January 1961.

These elections, too, provoked strong protests because they were also obviously irregular. Under this situation, a teachers' strike took place in May of that year and its violent course caused the replacement of Emami after a mere eight months in power.

Emami's successor in office was Ali Amini, a rich aristocrat, who took over the premiership with the aura of a liberal and reformer. However, under his government only minor reforms of the most burning social problems were carried out, while the structure permitting the Shah's rule remained intact.

The Mejlis was dissolved in May 1961 and the Premier was authorized to govern by cabinet decree until the formation of a new parliament.

The reformists' attempts to carry out an agrarian reform, to institute economic development plans, and to realize other measures met in practice with great problems and opposiyears later after changes in the proposed line in favour of Iranian claims.

Following 1968, Iranian claims to Bahreini territory were stepped up, which among other causes, created a new source of contradictions with the Saudi kingdom. Eventually, before the planned British withdrawal from territories east of Suez, the Bahreini problem was submitted to United Nations arbitration and Bahrein was recognized as a sovereign state.

It was in that period, too, when contradictions with Iraq over the estuary of Shatt el Arab gained in intensity. In April 1969, Iran denounced a 1937 treaty which defined the rights of navigation in the frontier region, and this move caused strong differences between the two countries, which became acute in the following year, although no military confrontation took place.

In June 1970 a new conflict was provoked with Iran's Arab neighbours about sovereignty over a group of islands in the Arabian-Persian Gulf, Abou Moussa and the Great and Small Tombs, belonging to two of the members of the United Arab Emirates, Ras al Khaimah and Sharjah respectively. In November 1971, on the eve of the proclamation of the federation formed by the Emirates, the Iranian army occupied the islands and established on them military outposts.

In July of the same year, Iran signed an agreement with Sultan Qabus of Oman, providing for direct Iranian military assistance to the Omani regime for the suppression of the guerilla movement in Dhofar. On December 20, 1973, Iranian soldiers began to take part in the war fought by the Sultanate of Oman, which participation lasted until 1977, greatly assisted Sultan Qabus, and, paradoxically, revived Saudi concern about Iranian penetration of the Arabian peninsula, while at the same time it indicated that the Shah had in effect accepted the role of the Gulf's policeman, which the United States had assigned him within the framework of the Nixon Doctrine.

Iranian troops also intervened in other parts of the world, some of them far removed from the Gulf—in Haile Selassie's Ethiopia, in Jordan, Pakistan, and South Vietnam.

Another major Iranian ally in the area was Israel to which Iran provided most of the petroleum necessary for its domestic consumption all the time up to the victory of the Islamic Revolution which toppled the Pahlavi dynasty.

New disputes arose between Iran and Iraq from 1971 to 1975 over frontier problems and because of Iranian assistance to the Khurdish separatist movement which at that time assumed the character of armed insurrection in the northeastern part of Iraq. Clashes occurred between the two countries in 1973. New confrontations were settled in February 1974 through United Nations mediation efforts which led to the signing in 1975 of the Algiers Agreements mediated by the then Algerian President Houari Boumedienne. These agreements provisionally settled the frontier dispute by defining the border between the two countries in keeping with the Constantinople Protocol of 1913 and subsequent conventions, while the Iranian regime promised to stop its assistance to the Kurdish separatists, which resulted in the immediate end of the war in Iraqi Kurdistan (see under Iraq, Brief history).

The show of strength in the Gulf area by the Pahlavi monarchy was accompanied by large-scale militarization and armament. Encouraged by the American policy to make available to the Iranian armed forces all types of conventional weapons, the Shah launched and directed a programme whose objective was, as he himself confessed, to turn his army into the fifth most powerful in the world within the shortest possible time. Iran's military budget rose to 10,000,000,000 dollars in 1976 and two years later was still close to that huge sum, continuing to constitute approximately one fourth of the total national budget for a number of years in the 1970s. During this period, many naval and air bases were built in different parts of the country, in particular around the Gulf and in the vicinity of the Soviet frontier. At the same time, the number of American military advisers was raised to an estimated 24,000 in the middle of the decade.

The internal apparatus of repression, too, was supplied with vast sums of money in the years of the petroleum boom- the amount invested in the SAVAK secret police in the final period of the monarchy is estimated at 2,000,000,000 dollars.

In March 1975, the Shah carried out a major change in the parliamentary system which until then had permitted the existence of other political parties than the governing one, and decided to form a single party, the Rastakhiz, of which Premier Hoveida was General Secretary. In elections held the same year, 80% of the elected members of parliament belonged to that organization.

In the second half of the 1970s, the accumulation of contradictions within Iranian society, caused by intensive repression, the separation of the Shah's development policy from the country's socio-economic reality and from the aspirations of the large masses of the dispossessed, by the scandalous corruption of the royal family and its associates in the government, by the open subservience to American interests in the area, and by the overt manipulation of the instruments of political power produced a widespread mass movement led by the Shiite clergy, which brought about a rapid disintegration of the entire system to the sorrow of the Western world.

Massive demonstrations took place between January and May 1978 in Qom, Tabriz, Teheran and other cities, in which the motive force was mainly university students and the Shiite clergy opposed to the monarchy.

In June of that year, Reza Pahlavi replaced the head of SAVAK, General Nematollah Nassiri, whom he sent to Pakistan as ambassador in a belated gesture of dipleasure with the inefficiency in stemming the rising tide of popular protest and at the same time in the endeavour to find a substitute for a figure rejected and detested by the people.

The impressive series of demonstrations, which were to continue until the fall of the regime, continued in the city of Isfahan in August, following the arrest of some 150 mullahs, and rapidly spread to other major urban centres—Tabriz, Shiraz and Teheran—together with strikes. The regime's response was a proclamation of martial law.

In October, as the spontaneous wave of demonstrations still continued, Ayatollah Khomeini moved to Paris after 16 years of exile in Iraq, and established residence at Neauphle-le-Chateau, from where he provided undisputed leadership to the insurrection. On October 29, Khomeini met with the leader of the National Front, Karim Sandjabi. The National Front was still representing one of the most important civilian coalitions opposed to the monarchy, and the community of its interests with those of the Shiite religious leader was to become a major factor in the overthrow of Reza Pahlavi. Inside Iran, the demonstrations of opposition to the regime also enjoyed the support of other banned progressive organizations, including the Tudeh Party.

In November, as the demonstrations went on and were becoming ever more comprehensive and radical in their demands, a strike of more than 67,000 petroleum workers took place, indicating the precarious position of the Shah's regime which, nevertheless preserved intact its mechanism of repression.

On November 5, a huge demonstration was held in the capital. The next day the Shah announced the appointment of the chief-of-staff, General Azhari, as Premier, reverting to the practice of setting up a military government as a means of crushing the revolt which by then had spread practically to the entire country. In Paris Ayatollah Khomeini responded with a call for a general uprising. This broke out on November 25, when life in Iran was effectively paralyzed by the spread of strikes and public demands for the overthrow of the unpopular emperor. On December 10, more than three million people took part in demonstrations throughout the country—the largest show of strength thus far.

At the end of December, in the face of the tide of popular discontent, which could not be contained, Reza Pahlavi offered the premiership to Shapur Bakhtiar, an old leader of the National Front, with whose appointment he hoped to change the course which was inevitably leading to the overthrow of the monarchy. New massive demonstrations on December 30 were an indication that the people continued to reject the regime no matter what subterfuge was used to change its image.

January 1979 began with violent repression in Meshed, in which more than 600 people were killed and some 1,000 were wounded. At the same time it was announced that the U.S. Sixth Fleet was sailing for the Arabian-Persian Gulf in an obviously threatening move, and that U.S. citizens in Iran, whose original number of more than 40,000 had markedly decreased at the height of the crisis, continued to be evacuated from the country.

Seriously concerned about the situation in Iran, the heads of state of the United States, Great Britain, France and West Germany met in Guadeloupe on January 4, and although the Iranian crisis was at the centre of their attention, they could do little to influence the course of events.

Some days later, Premier Bakhtiar announced the dissolution of SAVAK, the secret police, the institution of freedom of the press, and other measures which, however, were rejected by Khomeini as mere scraps offered to the people by the disintegrating regime. He also announced on January 13 from his retreat in France the formation of a Council of the Islamic Revolution, which in the future would direct the course of the popular insurrection.

Faced by the continued demonstrations, the paralysis of life in the country, and the evident failure of the government of conciliation headed by Bakhtiar, the Shah left Iran on January 16, on the first stage of what was to become a long pilgrimage to Egypt, although at that time he still cherished the hope of a repetition of his return staged by the CIA in 1953.

When the news of the Shah's departure became known, hundreds of thousands of people demonstrated in the streets of the capital, and three days later a new round of demonstrations was urged by Khomeini, in which more than three million people took part in Teheran alone.

Then followed a test of strength between the exiled religious leader in Paris and the wavering government of Shapur Bakhtiar, which belatedly tried to extricate itself from the corruption of the monarchy. After several attempts by the Bakhtiar government to obstruct his return home Khomeini did return to Iran on January 31, and was welcomed by more than four million demonstrators, who challenged possible repression by the monarchy's military aparatus which was then still intact. Five days later, after having avoided in that short but decisive period a confrontation with the government appointed by the Shah and therefore qualified by him as illegal, the Ayatollah Khomeini designated Mehdi Bazargan, a former Education Minister in the Mossadegh government, as the head of a Revolutionary Government. Thus began a brief period of dual power, in which became obvious the inevitable fall of Bakhtiar and the military leaders supporting him, the last representatives of the monarchy.

In the days which followed, a general strike continued throughout the country and became a decisive factor in the definite liquidation of the Bakhtiar government. On February 9, clashes were reported between different sectors of the armed forces, mainly the air force, which generally supported the popular positions at that stage of the struggle, and the supporters of the Shah, principally his personal guard of more than 10,000 men.

With the support of the people and of the revolutionary organizations, the clashes spread to different parts of the capital and quickly decided, albeit with a large number of casualties, the future of the pro-monarchy elements. On February 10, the operational staff of the Revolutionary Government proclaimed its victory after the Bakhtiar government and its military allies had caved in.

On February 12 Bazargan took his office in the seat of the Council of Ministers, marking the beginning of a difficult stage in which the entire repressive machinery of the old regime and the different key institutions of the old monarchy and its power were gradually dismantled.

On March 12 Iran announced its withdrawal from CENTO, thereby causing the disintegration of that aggressive pact.

On March 30 a national referendum was held, in which an overwhelming majority approved the constitution of an Islamic Republic and thus sealed the fate of the false Pahlavi dynasty and the monarchy in Iran. The Republic was then proclaimed the next day, April 1.

In the subsequent period a number of measures were taken to reorganize the national economy and to give the country new institutions replacing those of the imperial regime. At the beginning of July, a commission of 75 experts was appointed to draft a new constitution for the republic. At that time, too, large industrial enterprises were nationalized, in particular the metalurgical industry, the shipyards and the motor-car industry. On August 10, the government cancelled all contracts for the purchase of American military equipment, then valued at some 9,000,000,000 dollars.

On August 31, as a result of his differences with the revolutionary groups which rejected government control, Premier Bazargan submitted his resignation to the Ayatollah Khomeini.

At the Sixth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Havana, Iran joined the Movement as a full member.

In September Iran abrogated the law, enacted in 1946, which provided for the use of American advisers in the Iranian armed forces.

In the meantime, the overthrown Shah had made a long journey in his exile, which took him from his first stop-over in Asswan to Morocco and then to the Caribbean. He ostentatiously displayed his wealth taken away from the Iranian people, but paradoxically, it was at the same time a demonstration of his complete political isolation. At the end of October, stating that he was seriously ill, Reza Pahlavi received permission from the United States administration to receive treatment on American soil. Iran protested to the Carter administration against this decision on October 31, asserting that it was against its interests and that it was a sign of Washington's continued assistance to the Shah in his intention to overthrow the Islamic Republic.

Four days later, the United States Embassy in Teheran was seized by a group of radical students who demanded the extradition of the former Shah and condemned United States complicity in the designs of the overthrown imperial regime. The permanent occupation of the U.S. mission in Teheran and the detention there of the U.S. diplomatic staff accredited in Iran, marked the beginning of a long chapter of open confrontation between the governments in Washington and Teheran, which was settled only 444 days after the seizure of the embassy and after the electoral defeat of James Carter by Ronald Reagan, to which the events in Iran had undoubtedly contributed.

Premier Bazargan's resignation was finally accepted on Novmber 6, two days after the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran. The Islamic Revolutionary Council assumed responsibility for the government at the time when presidential and parliamentary elecopened the door to British capital which dominated the country's principal natural resource almost exclusively for close on 50 years.

It was in 1909 when the Anglo-Persian Oil Company was founded. Renamed the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company in 1935, it controlled, until its nationalization by the Mossadegh government in 1951, in an omnipotent form the exploration, exploitation and marketing of Iranian crude oil. After the events of 1953 (see under "Brief History"), United States capital formed, together with the old owners of the monopoly which the Anglo-Iranian retained, the so-called consortium of eight large companies, which took charge of the exploration and extraction of petroleum in Iran.

An agreement was renegotiated with the consortium in 1973, under which the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) took formal possession of the petroleum industry in the area controlled by the consortium in exchange for a twenty-year guarantee that it would supply crude oil to the Western companies making up the consortium under advantageous terms.

When the Pahlavi dynasty was overthrown, petroleum exports were carried out under new terms. In 1979, the NIOC was given full rights to petroleum exploration and exploitation, and it cancelled the 1973 agreement which granted the right to market Iranian crude to members of the old consortium. Similarly, in keeping with the orientation of the Islamic Revolution, supply of crude oil was stopped to South Africa and Israel, both allies of the imperial regime.

A policy was immediately adopted of preserving Iran's most important natural resource which had been indiscriminately exploited by the deposed Shah in order to invest the vast funds gained from petroleum in his armaments drive, on which he spent approximately one quarter of the national budget, and in his development plans which in many cases had shown themselves to be unviable in view of the structural limitations of the Iranian economy.

The average daily output of crude of 5,900,000 barrels, which had been reached in 1976 was reduced and stabilized at approximately 4,000,000 barrels. An official report issued in June 1980 noted that daily production was approximately 2,000,000 barrels, of which a half was used for domestic consumption. Later on, the outbreak of hostilities with Iraq greatly altered the rhythm of petroleum production and caused considerable damage to most of Iran's refineries.

Petroleum produced in 1977 an income exceeding 23,000,000,000 dollars, compared with the approximate 8,219,000,000 dollars earned in 1973, the year when the steady rise of oil prices began.

In 1979, for when the last available figures exist, petroleum production amounted to 148,932,000 tons (compared with 289,000,000 in 1977), which made Iran the second largest producer among the OPEC members in the Middle East (26.7%) surpassed only by Saudi Arabia. This equalled 10% of the total world output.

Iranian petroleum reserves are estimated to represent 9.2% of the total world reserves of this commodity.

Iran has a large network of refineries, the major one being located in Abadan, which is also the largest oil refinery in the world with its daily capacity of 600,000 barrels. Other major Iranian oil refineries are located in Shiraz, Teheran, Kermanshah, Neka, Tabriz, and Isfahan.

Iran's production of natural gas amounted to 57,300,000,000 cu.m in 1977. It is estimated that Iran has the world's second largest reserves of this commodity with its principal source located at Kanganles. A part of the production is exported to the Soviet Union through two gas pipelines, ICAT1 and 2.

Agriculture nevertheless continues to be the main economic activity of the population, employing 35% of the economically active Iranian population and accounting for approximately 15% of the GNP. Farmland covers some 19,000,000 hectares—11.5% of the country's total area—of which 5,300,000 hectares are irrigated. The seasonal precipitation in the provinces of Kermanshah, Kurdistan and Azerbaijan makes farming possible without irrigation.

The most important crops in the 1978-1979 season included 5,700,000 tons of wheat, 1,000,000 tons of barley, 1,650,000 tons of rice, 60,000 tons of maize, 3,900,000 tons of sugar beet, 1,700,000 tons of sugar cane, and 16,000 tons of tobacco.

The 1977 livestock figures include 2,100,000 sheep, 6,650,000 head of cattle, and more than 50,000,000 goats.

Iranian industry underwent an accelerated development in the past two decades thanks to large investments made possible by petroleum earnings. However, this industrial development had to face such problems as the general shortage of skilled labour, a lack of the necessary infrastructure, and the absence, in some cases, of raw materials. Between 1963 and 1974, industry grew at the average annual rate of 20%, while, for example, in the period 1977-1978, official figures showed a growth rate of 8% in the industrial sector.

According to 1977 data, Iran's principal industrial products included 150,000 motor cars, 6,500,000 tons of cement, 130,000 tons of cotton fibre, 580,000,000 metres of fabrics, 300,000 tons of steel, and 1,300,000 tons of iron.

After the victory of the Islamic Revolution, a large part of privately-owned industry—70.8% to be exact—was nationalized, as reported officially in September 1980.

Iran's output of electric power amounted to 17,235,000 kWh in 1977.

Government: Under the constitution adopted in February 1980, Iran is an Islamic Republic with a system of government which includes a President, a Prime Minister heading a cabinet, and a parliament. Known as the Mejlis, the parliament is a unicameral body of 270 members popularly elected by universal suffrage.

The President is elected directly by popular vote for a term of four years. All candidates for the presidential office must be approved by the Imam, who has retained important prerogatives as regards decisions of fundamental significance for the country. Thus, for example, the supreme religious leader appoints among other top officials the commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The President's duties include coordination of the work of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of the government.

There is a body called the Council of Vigilance, which is charged, among other tasks, with the approval of all laws passed by parliament.

The last administrative division of the country was carried out in May 1977 and established 23 provinces (ostans), 472 districts (sharestans), and 499 townships (bakhs).

Armed forces: Iran's armed forces rank among the largest in the Middle East. In 1978 they had 415,000 men of whom 285,000 served in the army, 30,000 in the navy, and 100,000 in the air force. The military budget in the fiscal year 1978-1979 was 9,942,000,000 dollars, that is 24% of the total budgetary expenditures. Since the overthrow of the Pahlavi dynasty, the armed forces have undergone great changes. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution a large part of these forces was dissolved, although subsequent events, including the conflict with Iraq, have led to the strengthening of the country's military capacity.

Organizations: The Islamic Republican Party, headed by the Ayatollah Shariat-Madari, won the parliamentary elections held in March 1980, and thus gained the majority of seats in the first Mejlis of the Islamic Republic. The political spectrum in Iran includes many other political organizations which had taken an active part in the overthrow of the tions had been called.

A few days later, on November 14, as a part of the rising tension between the United States and Teheran, Iranian air space and territorial waters were closed to American aircraft and ships, and sales of Iranian petroleum to the United States were suspended. Washington, in turn, retaliated by freezing all Iranian assets in the United States, noting that it was thereby responding to the announced Iranian decision to withdraw them. This move, unprecedented in international financial relations, provoked signs of distrust even among such close American allies as Saudi Arabia and others, to whom Washington had to explain its decision, since it involved a dangerous practice for foreign customers of American banks.

At the end of November, on the 28th, the conclusion of an agreement was announced with the Democratic Party of Kurdistan, providing for cessation of armed clashes in the Kurdish region of Iran, which had grown in number in the preceding weeks and which threatened the unity of the recently proclaimed Islamic Republic.

On November 29, a legal claim was filed in the courts against the former Shah for some 20,000,000,000 dollars, the estimated amount of misappropriation of public funds realized through the Pahlavi Foundation alone.

In the midst of this unsettled internal and international situation, decisive steps began to be taken to legalize republican power. On December 2 and 3, a referendum was held on the newly drafted Islamic Constitution, which was overwhelmingly approved by the population and which granted to the Imam supreme secular and religious authority within the framework of the Islamic Republic.

On January 25, 1980, presidential elections were held, in which the voters had to choose from among a large number of candidates representing the different forces involved in the complex political process in Iran. The majority of the votes went to Abol Hassan Banisadr, a close collaborator of Imam Khomeini, who thus became the first President of the Iranian Republic and was installed in office the next day. In February, Banisadr was appointed chairman of the Islamic Republican Council in a move underlining his principal role in the conduct of state affairs. As commander-in-chief of the armed forces, he announced their reorganization on February 20.

At the beginning of March, an agrarian reform law was passed, and on March 20, the decision was taken to nationalize Iran's external trade.

An important step in the formation of new institutions was taken on March 14, when the first elections to the Mejlis after the overthrow of the monarchy took place. In the first round of these elections, when 98 of the 270 members of the Mejlis were chosen, the Islamic Republican Party emerged victorious according the the preliminary count, and in the end won 70% of the votes. The second and final round of the parliamentary elections took place on May 9, with more than 4,000 candidates vying for the remaining seats in the Mejlis. The newly elected parliament held its first session on May 28, and provisionally elected as its president Yadollah Sahedi.

Meanwhile, the crisis about the occupation of the U.S. Embassy in Teheran was further aggravated in spite of a number of mediation attempts, including one by the United Nations. On April 7, the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Iran and announced the application of severe economic sanctions against Iran, which were subsequently joined by its principal allies. On April 24, Washington ordered a military operation designed to rescue the U.S. citizens held in the Teheran embassy compound, but the operation dismally failed without ever reaching its objective, and seriously harmed the image of the Carter administration in handling the Iranian situation. Moreover, Washington was widely criticized throughout the world for the aggressive turn it gave to the crisis.

Parallel with this development, Iran's relations with Iraq increasingly showed signs of deterioration, which became quite evident at the beginning of April, when a state of emergency was proclaimed in a number of Iran's provinces because of the tension along the Iraqi frontier.

In July 1980 President Banisadr denounced a conspiracy against the Islamic Revolution, in which ex-Premier Bakhtiar played a major role. When the revolution prevailed, Bakhtiar fled the country and plotted against the Islamic Republic from his exile in Paris.

On July 19 the Islamic Revolutionary Council was dissolved and its legislative powers were transferred to the Supreme Constitutional Council, whereby a new constitutional law was in effect created.

On July 27 the overthrown Shah, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, died in Cairo after having left the United States some months earlier to return via Panama to Egypt where he had been offered protection by Anwar Sadat.

A major polemic regarding the appointment of a new Premier, this time designated in keeping with the constitutional precepts that had been recently established, was settled on August 11 by the appointment and parliamentary confirmation of Mohammed Ali Rajai who had served as Education Minister and whose stand was close to that of the Islamic Republican Party. On August 31 Rajai introduced his cabinet to the Mejlis.

The crisis between Iran and Iraq continued to grow from bad to worse throughout the summer months of 1980 and reached its climax in September when, after having denounced armed clashes with Iranian troops and after having abrogated the 1975 treaty between the two countries, Iraq sent its troops across the Iranian border, thereby launching a major conflict between the two neighbouring countries (see under Iraq, Brief history). In order to stop the hostilities from extending along the entire frontier, the Movement of Non-Algined Countries immediately engaged in the mediation pointed to the fact that the war benefited only imperialist interests in the area.

In November, after the Iranian parliament had analyzed the situation of the United States citizens detained in the country, it approved a set of four basic conditions for the release of the Americans. These included the freeing of Iranian assets in the United States, and an end of American interference in the internal affairs of Iran, suspension of court actions against Iran, filed by many American companies and individuals, and guarantees that the fortune amassed by the former Shah and his family would be returned to Iran.

With the help of Algerian mediation, the negotiations between the United States and Iran finally led to the departure of the 52 Americans still held in the country on January 20, 1981. Subsequently a debate opened in the Iranian parliament on the conduct of the crisis and the effects on the country of the events relating to the seizure of the U.S. Embassy, which had lasted for more than a year.

In February Iran announced that it was breaking off diplomatic relations with Jordan and Morocco because of their support of Iraq in its conflict with Iran, which continued and now dominated the situation in the Arabian-Persian Gulf.

On June 22, 1981, Imam Khomeini dismissed President Banisadr and thus confirmed the parliamentary charge of the latter's "political incompetence".

The internal crisis in Iran grew still, more acute when, on June 28, a powerful bomb exploded in the building of the Islamic Republican Party and killed 72 of the party's leaders and top government officials, including the head of the party, Ayatollah Beheshti.

Economy: Petroleum has dominated Iran's economy for many decades but became decisive especially in the past 20 years and still more so after the steep rise in the price of crude oil in 1973. The first commercially exploitable sources of petroleum were discovered in 1908 in the Masjid-i-Suleiman area, barely seven years after the D'Arcy concession had monarchy, among them the National Front, which is the heir of the ideas championed by Mossadegh and was founded by him at the beginning of the 1950s.

The Tudeh (Communist) Party has distinguished itself in Iranian history by its militant opposition to the monarchy, and today supports the Islamic Republic.

There are also the National Democratic Front, whose appearance on the political scene took place after the fall of the monarchy, the People's Mujahiddin Organization, which combines Marxist and Islamic ideas, the People's Feddayin, whose members had been deeply involved in the popular struggle against the Shah, and the People's Democratic Union, which was formed in the last stage of the struggle against Reza Pahlavi.

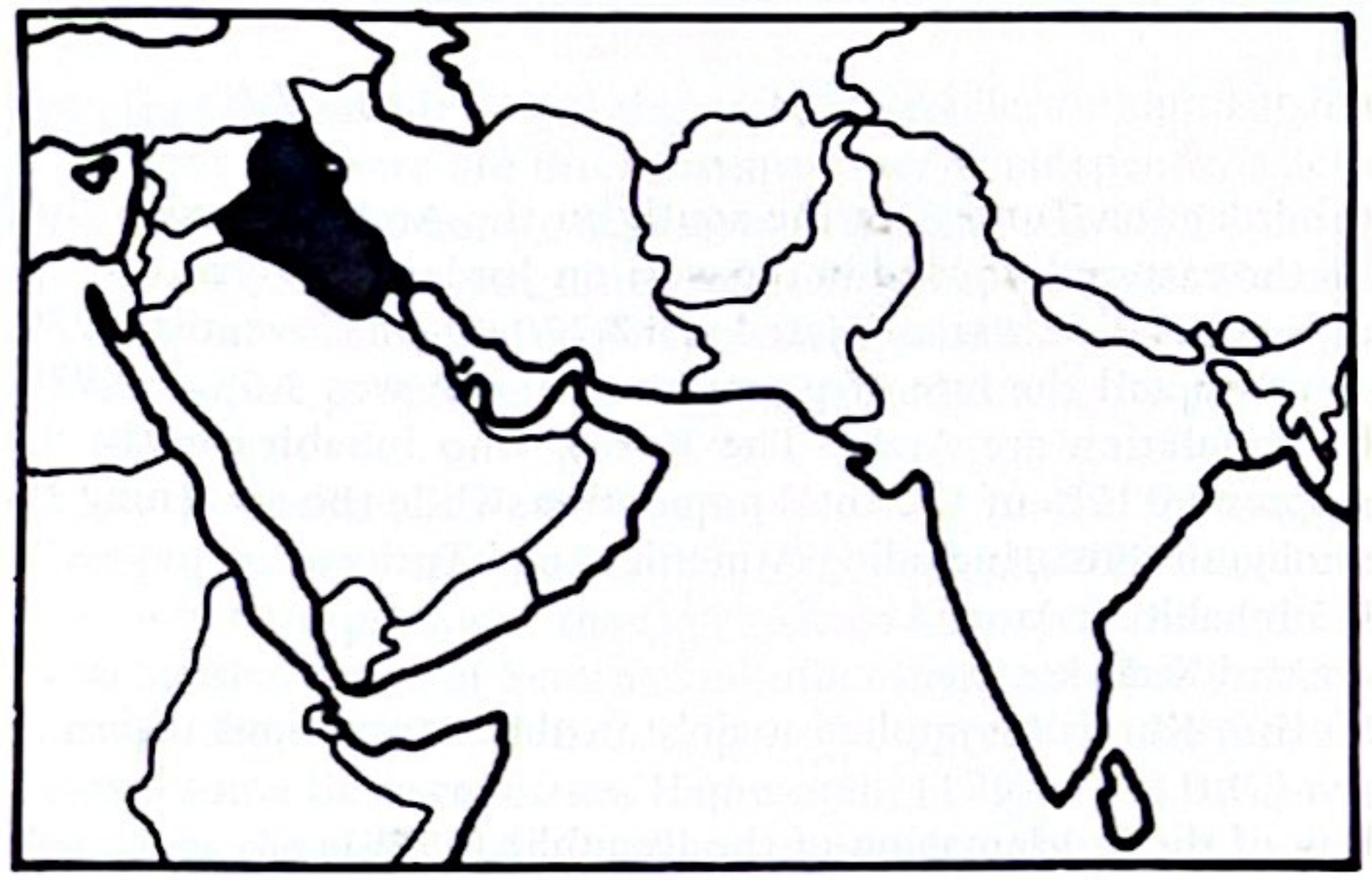
Education: The latest available data on education—for 1977—show that primary schools were attended by 4,500,000 pupils, that 1,200,000 boys and girls attended pre-secondary schools, 900,000 were enrolled in secondary schools and 160,000 in vocational schools, and that Iran's sixteen unviersities had the total enrolment of 180,000. In the 1970s the illiteracy rate among the rural population was 85% and in urban areas 65%. Illiteracy is still very high in the adult population.

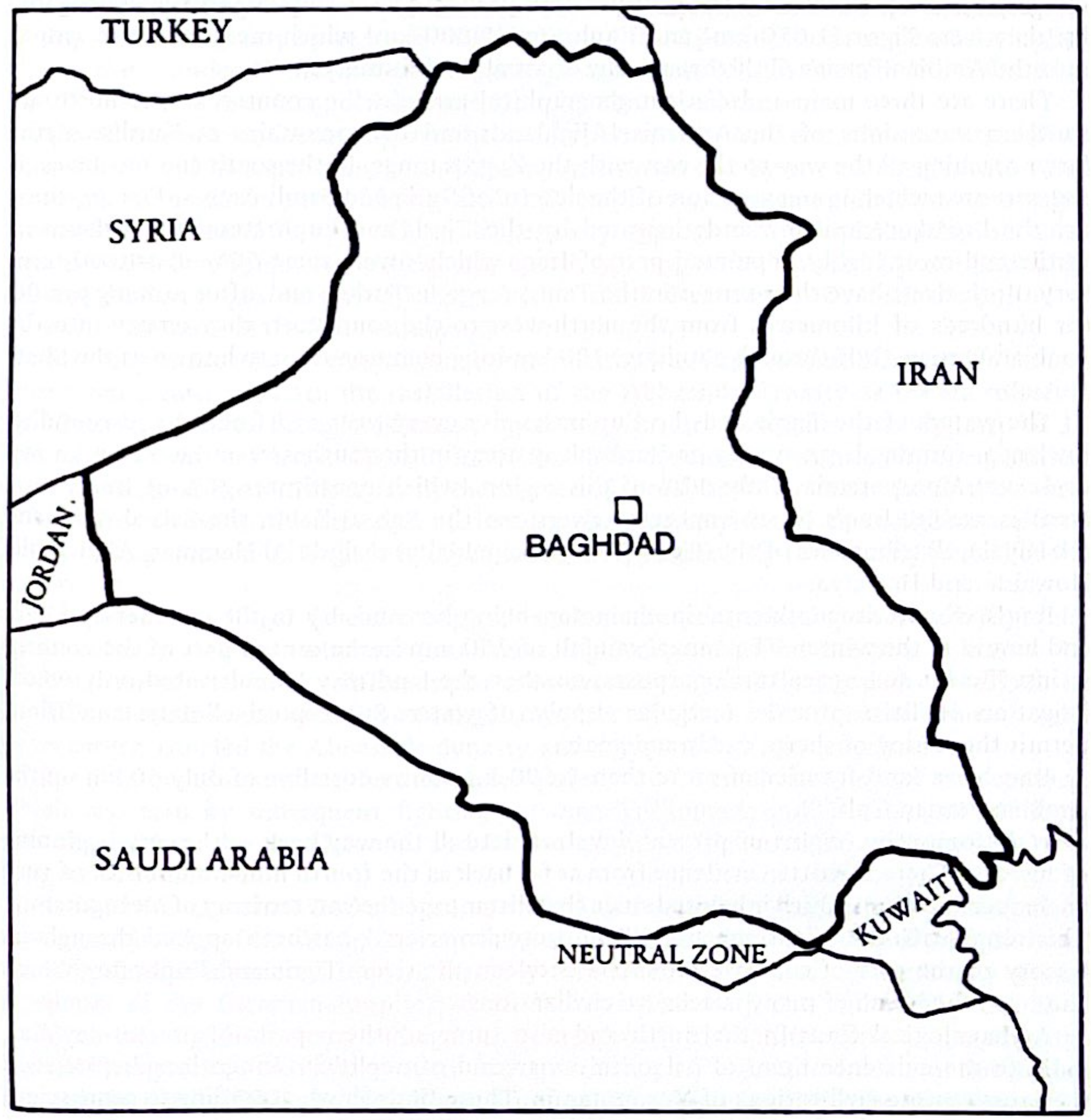
Public health: There is a great discrepancy between the availability of medical service in the capital and in most of the rest of the country as a heritage of the imperial regime. It was estimated in 1977, that Iran had some 11,300 doctors of whom 46.4% practised their profession in Teheran—a proportion of one doctor per 800 inhabitants—while on the nationwide scale there was one doctor per 3,000 inhabitants. Some 18,000 Iranian doctors practised their profession abroad, mainly in the United States, at the time when the Shah was overthrown.

There are less than 600 hospitals and maternity clinics in the country, and approximately 50,000 hospital beds.

Religion: The overwhelming majority of Iranians are Moslems of the Shiite sect (more than 90%). Islam is professed by more than 98% of the total population. Armenians and Assyrians represent 0.8%, and Jews and Zoroastrians account for the remaining 1.2%. There are other, insignificant religious minorities such as those professing the Greek Orthodox creed among the Christians, or 60,000 members of the native Bahai sect.

IRAQ





Official name: The Republic of Iraq.
Area: 434,924 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Iraq borders on Turkey, in the south on the Arabian-Persian Gulf Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, in the east on Iran, and in the west on Jordan and Syria.
Population: The size of Iraq's population was estimated at 12,770,000 in November 1979. 63.7% of the population is urban and the rate of population growth was 3.5% in 1978. Approximately 80% of the population are Arabs. The Kurds, who inhabit mostly the northeast of the country, represent 17% of the total population, while the remaining 3% are made up of different ethnic minorites, including Armenians and Turks.
Capital: Baghdad (3,205,645 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Mosul, Basra and Kirkuk.
Languages: Arabic and Kurdish. Kurdish is spoken mainly in the autonomous region of Kurdistan.
Public holidays: July 14, Day of the Proclamation of the Republic (1958).
Geography: Iraq, situated in the southwestern part of Asia, occupies a vast plain irrigated by the rivers Tigris (1,850 km) and Euphrates (2,800 km) which merge there to empty into the Arabian-Persian Gulf through the Shatt al-Arab estuary.

There are three main and distinct geographical areas in the country. In the north are southern extensions of the Armenian Highlands and the mountains of Kurdistan, the latter reaching all the way to the east with the Zagros range. In the south and southwest is a desert area which is an extension of the deserts of Syria and Saudi Arabia. Finally, there are the broad, central lowlands irrigated by the Tigris and Euphrates. This is the most fertile and most highly populated part of Iraq, which covers some 60% of its total territory. Both rivers have their source in the Tauro range in Turkey and, after running parallel for hundreds of kilometres from the north-west to the south-east, they empty into the Arabian-Persian Gulf through a unique, 100 km-long common estuary known as the Shatt al-Arab.

The waters of the Tigris and the Euphrates rise every year and flood the surrounding lowlands, forming large marshy and unhealthy areas in the southeast, in the region known as Lower Mesopotamia. Only 12% of this region (which constitutes 20% of Iraq's total area) is arable. Iraq's other important rivers are the Sab al-Kabir, the Sab al-Asfal and the Diyala, all tributaries of the Tigris. The principal lakes include Al Hammar, Al Habinia, Howaisa and Howaiya.

Iraq's climate is continental in character, being hot and dry in the summer and cool and humid in the winter. The annual rainfall of 250 mm in the central part of the country is insufficient for agricultural purposes, so that the land may be cultivated only where irrigation facilities provide a regular supply of water. Subtropical climatic conditions permit the raising of sheep, cattle and goats.

Iraq has a land frontier of more than 3,600 km, but a coastline of only 60 km on the Arabian-Persian Gulf.

Brief history: The origins of present-day Iraq date all the way back to the very beginning of history. There is written evidence from as far back as the fourth millennium B.C. of very ancient civilizations which inhabited since that distant age the vast territory of Mesopotamia. This term of Greek origin, meaning "land between rivers", has been applied throughout history to the part of southwestern Asia between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, which had been the home of many successive civilizations.

Archaeological finds in the north and also some southern parts of present-day Iraq indicate the existence there of paleolithic man and of neolithic farmers long before even the most remote civilizations of Mesopotamia. These finds show, according to some scientists, that this area is one of the probable cradles of humanity.

In general, there are three distinct areas of independent development, which, however, were related in the course of history. The first, universally described as Assyria, was in the north and its prominent cities were Nineveh, Asur and Mosul. In the central part was the magnificent Chaldaean civilization which built the city of Babylon, and in the south, where Semitic peoples first settled, was Accad with its great urban centres of Ur and Uruk among others.

The Sumerian civilization, considered to be the first in human history with a highly advanced culture, emerged around the year 3,000 B.C. and created the cuneiform script. The Sumerians produced the first written history of the region before they were absorbed by successive waves of Semitic and other invaders who established a number of kingdoms. Around the year 2000 B.C. began the period of the flourishing of Babylonia, which covered some three centuries. Hammurabi (1792-1750 B.C.) was the most famous ruler of that era as the author of a legal code known to this day.

In approximately 745 B.C., the Semitic rulers of Assyria extended their dominion over Mesopotamia and a large part of the Middle East. After a period known as neo-Babylonian, Cyrus, the founder of the first of the three great ancient Persian dynasties, established in 538 B.C. his rule over Iraq, which was to last for almost ten centuries.

The Persians were eventually overthrown by Alexander the Great, the conqueror of all Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, who, in turn, was succeeded by the Seleucids, who ruled Iraq and the northern part of Syria until their empire was broken up under the onslaught of the Roman general Pompey. Then, the territory of present-day Iraq fell to the Parthians, the third Persian dynasty of Antiquity, but they, too, were displaced by the Sassanids, also of Persian origin, whose reign lasted from the 3rd century A.D. until the period of Moslem expansion in the 7th century.

The Iraqi territory, conquered by the new faith, was first governed from Medina and later from Damascus, until the installation of the Abbasside dynasty as the successor of the Ommiads, which brought Islamic Iraq to its greatest splendour. That dynasty of 37 caliphs founded Baghdad in 762. From 768 to 809 the empire was ruled by the mythical Harun al Rashid, the most frequently mentioned of the Abbasside rulers, who in the course of the five centuries of their reign achieved a remarkable political and religious unity of the entire area, in which Baghdad played a key role, particularly in the early period of the empire.

However, centrifugal forces conspired against the centralized power and from the tenth century on, the caliphate was increasingly dependent on the protection of the Turkish dynasties, while its different provinces were dominated by invaders or local rebels. In 1258, Baghdad was sacked by Mongol invaders who had arrived in the country eight years earlier, toppled the Abbasside dynasty and conquered its whole realm.

The Mongol domination further deteriorated the internal situation of the country which was torn by subsequent fighting between Turkomans and Tartars, and still later was claimed both by the Ottoman and Persian empires which asserted religious factors to support their claims.

In 1405 the Ottoman Turks began to extend their rule over Iraqi territory, when they drove out the last of the Mongols from the north of the country. In 1638, although threatened by Persian invasions, Iraq was formally turned into a province and eventually several provinces of the Ottoman Empire, which status it had until the end of World War I.

When that war broke out, so began the period of British influence over the country. By 1918, as a result of military operations, practically all of Iraq had come under British control. In April 1920, the San Remo Conference, which legalized the division of the spoils of the war among the victorious European powers placed Iraq under a formal British mandate.

In the same year, a popular revolt broke out against colonial rule and lasted until 1921, when Great Britain decided to turn the country into a kingdom and offered the crown to Emir Faisal, the son of the King of Hedjaz, who had been driven out of the Arabian Peninsula by the Saud family, the founders of present-day Saudi Arabia. The coronation took place in Baghdad in August of that year. Nevertheless, discontent among the population persisted, and five years later a constitutional monarchy was established.

Before then, however, the Iraqi monarchy concluded a treaty with Great Britain, under which broad powers were conceded to the British against strong opposition by the nationalist movement, which demanded an end to British domination.

A new treaty, concluded in 1926 between Turkey, Iraq and Great Britain, recognized the frontiers which emerged from the world conflict as definite and inviolable. In 1930, when the government in London decided to support Iraq's application for membership in the League of Nations, yet another treaty was concluded between the metropolitan power and Iraq, which determined the methods of British domination of the country and established a still closer alliance between the two nations for a period of 25 years, beginning on the day Iraq was admitted to the League of Nations. This happened—with strong British support—in October 1932.

In 1936, in the first of a whole series of forcible changes of government during the period of the monarchy, a group of officers, led by Hikmat Suleiman, seized the government. King Faisal died in 1933 and was succeeded for a brief period of six years by his son Ghasi, who died in a car accident in 1939. He was succeeded by his son, Faisal II, who was then still a boy. His uncle, Emir Abdullah, assumed the regency in which post he exercised strong influence for a number of years, during which the government of Hikmat Suleiman fell apart. Throughout that period, the British maintained their direct military presence in the country, essentially at their Habbaniya air base.

When World War II began, the popular sentiment against British activities in Palestine, which were obviously detrimental to the Arab cause, ran quite high. At that time the premiership was held by General Nuri al Said, but when he faced serious differences within his cabinet, he resigned in favour of Rashid al Gailani. The new premier dissociated himself from the Anglo-Iraqi alliance after the differences with the British about their right to use Iraqi territory for pursuit of the war. Following the coup, the regent and ex-Premier Said fled to Transjordan. The coup brought about a new British military intervention, and the old government was re-instated under allegations of the existence of a pro-Nazi conspiracy in the country. In 1943, Iraq formally declared war on the Axis powers and in 1945 established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. It also acceded to the Charter of the United Nations.

In the subsequent years, the policy pursued by Premier Nuri al Said and Regent Abdullah, who on a number of occasions suppressed the political parties and subordinated the country to Western interests and plans, provoked strong and broadly-based opposition among many strata of Iraqi society.

An alliance concluded between Great Britain and Iraq in 1948, and an Iraqi-Turkish treaty, both signed by Premier Nuri al Said, formed the basis of a system known as the Baghdad Pact, which was later expanded into the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO).

In 1958, in order to counter the growing nationalist demands of the Arab masses sympathizing with the postulates of Gamal Abdel Nasser, and in obvious response to the formation of the United Arab Republic, Iraq and Jordan — both governed by monarchs descended from the House of Hedjaz of the Arabian Peninsula, proclaimed a formal union.

This move provoked popular opposition in Iraq. In the same year, the American intervention in Lebanon at the request of that country's Maronite President Camille Chamoun, also produced a negative reaction in a number of Middle Eastern countries.

On July 14, 1958, a military movement, led by Brigadier General Abdul Karim Kassem and Colonel Abdul Salam Aref, overthrew the monarchy, executed the members of the royal family, and the following year announced Iraq's withdrawal from the Baghdad Pact.

A few days after the end of the monarchy, a constitution of the Republic of Iraq was proclaimed. A Council of Sovereignty performed the presidential duties until the appointment of a President by the emergent republic, while General Kassem assumed the offices of Premier and Minister of Defence.

Political parties, although they had been formally banned under the monarchy, played an important role in that movement. Among them, the BAATH Party took a part in the aforesaid events, just as had the Communist Party, which had an outstanding organization.

A few months after the proclamation of the republic, Abdul Salam Aref broke with the Kassem government because of differences regarding relations with Egypt. In March 1959 a rebellion broke out in Mosul, which was quickly suppressed. In the same month, the closure was announced of the facilities used by the British Royal Air Force at the Habbaniya base.

Under the Kassem government, differences also arose with Kuwait about the recognition of that country, which under the Ottoman Empire belonged to the Iraqi province of Basra. In addition, armed insurrection broke out at that time in Kurdistan against the central authority. The Kurds demanded autonomy or secession, and this situation was not solved until the BAATH Party seized power in the 1960s and guaranteed them autonomy within the framework of the Republic of Iraq.

In February 1963, a BAATH-inspired movement within the armed forces overthrew General Kassem after some bitter fighting.

On February 8, the day when the uprising broke out against Kassem—he was executed after the insurrection prevailed—a Revolutionary Command Council was constituted by the organizers of the operation, who were adherents of different political trends. In November of the same year, the BAATH members in the government were removed by Aref with the help of the army chief-of-staff, Taher Yahya, who then headed a cabinet which included representatives of different Nasserite tendencies.

On July 14, 1965, President Aref, who had earlier planned his country's merger with Nasser's Egypt under a unified political command, which he did not succeed in realizing, announced the unification of all the country's political parties in a new organization. At that time there was a sharp conflict between advocates of the union with Egypt, known as "Unionists", and those who opposed such a move.

On April 13, 1966, Aref died in an airplane crash. The National Defence Council and the cabinet headed by Abdel Rahman al Bazzaz then met in joint session and elected as President of the Republic for a term of one year the Chief-of-Staff of the Armed Forces, Abdel Rahman Aref, the brother of the late head of state.

On May 3, 1967, the presidential term was extended by another year under the decision of the National Defence Council and the cabinet, which was this time headed by Brigadier General Naji Taleb. On April 16, 1968, thirteen high army officers submitted to President Aref a petition demanding a reform of the regime, which reflected the growing lack of popularity of the government's policy.

On July 17, 1968, a military movement headed by General Ahmed Hassan Al Bakr seized power in a bloodless coup. Al Bakr, who was a member of the Revolutionary Command Council, was appointed President of the Republic, and a new era in Iraq's history opened.

In November 1969, Saddam Hussein, the Assistant Secretary General of the BAATH Party and a distinguished fighter against the dictatorial regimes, was named Vice-President of the Revolutionary Command Council.

After the movement of July 17, 1968, took power, Iraq pursued a decisive policy of economic and social development and of defence of the country's natural resources, and in its foreign policy active assistance to the anti-imperialist cause.

The revolution of 1968 adopted a provisional constitution based on democratic foundations and justice for the people, and gave the BAATH Party the political leadership of the country independently of the unification which it was to promote with the other national forces.

As for the problem of Kurdistan, the government initiated a policy of negotiation designed to solve the conflict with the Kurdish minority.

The legitimate rights of the Kurds to their national identity were misused by such groups as that of Mustafa Barzani, who launched a civil war with the assistance of the Shah's Iran and under the guidance of the CIA, which wanted to overthrow Iraq's progressive government.

The Kurdish Democratic Party led by Barzani included other prominent political personalities who did not agree with the methods used to lead the Kurdish movement into a confrontation with the BAATH government.

The government entered into negotiations with those patriotic elements and Barzani was defeated militarily by the Iraqi army as well as politically within his own party.

On March 11, 1970, the Revolutionary Council signed with a new leadership of the Kurdish Democratic Party a fifteen-point declaration which recognized the national, cultural and language rights of the Kurdish people. This declaration of principles paved the way for the granting of autonomy to the Kurdish people, which took place four years later, on March 11, 1974, The relevant Autonomy Act recognized the Kurdish language, the national identity and the cultural rights of the Kurds, and laid the legal foundations for the formation of the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan, which is governed by a Legislative Council and an Executive Council whose members come from ten different administrative areas.

The Agrarian Reform Act was applied to the Autonomous Region subsequently, and in recent years a large-scale plan of economic investments has been implemented in its three provinces.

In 1972, as a result of closer relations with the socialist countries, which supported the progressive policy of the new government, Iraq signed a Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with the Soviet Union, which also served as a basis for intensive economic cooperation between the two countries.

On June 1, 1972, the government nationalized the Iraq Petroleum Company in a move which launched a programme of recovery of the country's most important natural resource (see under "Economy"). Earlier, an agrarian reform law had been enacted.

On July 17, 1973, a National Pact was signed with the Communist Party, which opened the way for the constitution of a National Progressive Front made up of the BAATH and the Communist Parties, which was later joined by other parties, including the Kurdish Democratic Party.

Iraq has been actively involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict as a firm defender of the national rights of the Palestinian people. During the 1973 war, Iraqi troops participated in operations on the Syrian front.

Since 1970, five-year economic development plans have been put into effect for the

purpose of establishing the foundations of a modern agricultural production. This project is being financed from the large income derived from petroleum exports.

In July 1979, Saddam Hussein was appointed President of the Republic and of the Revolutionary Command Council after Ahmed Hassan Al Bakr retired for reasons of poor health. Hussein is also the General Secretary of the BAATH Party.

In December 1979, parliamentary elections were called for May of the following year. More than six million voters went to the polls and elected—for the first time—250 members of the National Assembly from among 840 candidates.

Since the early months of that year, relations with Iran showed signs of a serious deterioration. In April, the Iraqi government officially reiterated that it did not recognize Iranian sovereignty over the islands of Great and Small Tom and Abu Moussa in the Gulf, which Iran had been occupying since 1971, before the British had withdrawn from the small Arab principalities in that area. In the same month, a growing number of frontier clashes between the two countries was reported, indicating a revival of the traditional territorial disputes between Iraq and Iran.

In September, Iraq denounced the Algiers Agreement, accusing Iran of violations of its national territory. This agreement had been signed in March 1975 and basically delineated the frontier between the two countries in the estuary of Shatt al-Arab, and provided for the re-establishment of controls in the frontier areas, which had as its immediate result Iran's withdrawal of assistance to the Kurdish separatist movement of Mustafa Barzani, that had gained new strenth; this ended the insurrection in the Iraqi part of Kurdistan.

At a special session of the National Assembly, President Hussein declared that Iraq would re-establish its sovereignty over the entire length of the Shatt al-Arab.

On September 22, 1980, large-scale fighting erupted between the two countries, which obviously has a negative impact on the revolutionary process in both Iraq and Iran. On the 23rd, Iraq reported an advance of its forces into Iran's Khuzestan province, and a protracted war began between the two countries. A number of mediating efforts were immediately launched, among them that of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which called for an end of the conflict in keeping with its guiding principles and for the benefit of the two countries, both of which are its members.

Economy: Iraq's economy is based on agriculture and mining. In recent years, basically since the nationalization of the petroleum industry in 1972, petroleum has played a key role, even though an intensive development of agriculture is under way, as well as efforts to diversify the country's industry.

In 1925, the Iraq Petroleum Company (IPC), financed by British, American, Dutch and French capital, obtained concessions for the exploitation of Iraqi petroleum resources for a period of 75 years. Later, in 1932 and 1934 respectively, two independent affiliated companies—the Mosul and the Basra Petroleum Companies (MPC and BPC)—received new concessions which extended the foreign control of the mineral riches of Iraq.

On June 1, 1972, the government nationalized the Iraq Petroleum Company, and this state-owned enterprise took charge of the exploitation and exploration of the country's petroleum resources.

The Nationalization Act of 1972 includes the following provisions: payment by the foreign companies of 141,000,000 pounds sterling to the Iraqi government; an Iraqi pledge to provide those companies with 15,000,000 tons of crude petroleum as indemnity; an undertaking by the foreign companies to return their concessions to the Iraqi government without any compensation.

Between 1972 and 1975, Iraq gained complete control over the foreign companies exploiting its petroleum wealth.

The first stage of the nationalization process had as its main objective full domestic supply on the basis of the development of the existing refineries and the construction of the necessary production facilities for all petroleum derivatives.

Later, the Iraqi state assumed responsibility not only for the exploitation of crude petroleum, but also for its marketing and transportation.

After the petroleum resources had been recovered, the share of these resources on the income-side of the national budget rose from the 17.7% achieved in 1951 to 75.6% in 1974. By 1977 it had risen to approximately 90%, and petroleum produced 94% of all Iraq's foreign-exchange earnings.

In that year, petroleum accounted for 98% of all of the country's exports. Two years later, in 1979, Iraq produced more than 168,000,000 tons of crude, i.e., 4% of the total world output, which made it the world's fifth largest petroleum producer, and the second one among the members of OPEC.

The average daily production increased from 2,268,000 barrels in 1977 to more than 3,400,000 at the end of 1979, as officially reported.

The principal petroleum-producing area is around Kirkuk in the northeastern part of the country, from where an oil pipeline carried Iraq's crude oil to Syria's Mediterranean coast. This pipeline has the approximate capacity of 1,400,000 barrels a day. A second pipeline was completed in 1977, which runs from Kirkuk across Turkish territory to Dortyol. its approximate capacity is 300,000 barrels a day.

In the Gulf area, where Iraq's major petroleum reserves are estimated to exist, there are two pipeline systems. One, with the daily capacity of 800,000 barrels, runs from Maditha to Fao, the second one leads from Buzurgan and Abu Gharib to Rumaillah and from there to the Gulf ports.

Iraq also has a large network of refineries for processing its crude oil. The major one at Doura, is located near Baghdad, the capital, and is connected with Basra in the south by a pipeline for petroleum derivatives, which has a daily capacity of about 140,000 barrels. Other important refineries are those at Dur, which went into operation in 1978 and has the capacity of 60,000 tons of lubricants and 250,000 tons of asphalt, and at Somawa, also completed in 1978, which processes some 10,000 barrels a day. Two more oil refineries are under construction, at Baiji and Khor al Zubair, which have the daily capacity of 220,000 and 300,000 barrels respectively.

Iraq's fleet of tankers, established in 1972 as an autonomous state-owned company, had the carrying capacity of 1,850,000 tons in 1977, and is considered to be the second largest in the Middle East after the Saudi tanker fleet.

Industries related to the exploitation of petroleum play an important role in the Iraqi economy. In 1977 the total production of natural gas was reported to be 468,000,000 cu.m. In 1976 only 15% of the extracted natural gas was being utilized, but many projects for its processing may increase its exploitation to 25% by 1981. The plants for processing natural gas are located at Rumaillah, Khor al Zubair and Kirkuk.

Iraq's major petrochemical complex is being built at Basra and after its completion in 1980-1981, it is expected to produce some 150,000 tons of polythene and polyvinylchloride, as well as 40,000 tons of caustic soda.

There are also some fertilizer plants, the largest of which is located at Khor al Zubair and produces 1,000,000 tons of urea annually. Two other plants at Basra have the combined capacity of more than 680,000 tons of urea and 300,000 tons of nitrates.

Besides petroleum, Iraq produces sulphates in the areas of Mihraq and Kirkuk, and phosphates at Akashat. A phosphate fertilizer complex is in operation at Al Qaim. In other northern parts of the country prospecting is under way for iron ore, chromium, copper, lead and zinc. There is also confirmed existence of important deposits of limestone, gypsum and salt. A salt-processing plant at Fao in the Gulf area, scheduled to go into operation in 1980, was planned to produce roughly 600,000 tons annually.

At the beginning of the 1970s there was no manufacturing industry to speak of, except for some food-processing factories and some plants producing building materials. Since then, a sustained effort has been made to diversify Iraq's industry. In 1979 26 new industrial projects were scheduled to be completed, which would raise the country's general level of industrial production by 23%.

The most important production facilities in this economic sector include a textile mill in Mosul and four others under construction, an asphalt plant in the area of Qaiyarah, three sugar refineries in Kerbala, Sulaimaniya and Mosul, and a paper mill in Basra. 12,000,000 tons of cement were expected to be produced by 1980. A new textile industry is being developed in the northern town of Arbil with an annual capacity of more than 1,000,000 m of fabrics, as well as an electrical engineering plant in Baquabah.

Moreover, Iraq has built a tractor-assembly plant, a synthetic fibre plant in Hindiyah, a number of vehicle assembly plants, and glass, shoe and pharmaceutics factories.

Agricultural production is pursued on an area of 4,848,000 hectares. It is being gradually collectivized in cooperatives and state farms with the help of agro-industrial complexes. In 1970, the government adopted a second agrarian reform law, which suspended all payments to landowners whose estates had been expropriated. and ensured the development of this basic sector of the national economy. In 1972 1,100,000 hectares of land were distributed to the most impoverished peasants. State and about 1,000 cooperative farms were established on that land, the latter associating roughly 250,000 peasants. In 1979, the number of cooperative farms was 1,987 and their membership had reached 355,000.

Of the country's total of 58,000,000 hectares of arable land, 28,000,000 hectares are already productive and are worked collectively by peasants associated in cooperatives, while 6,000,000 hectares are cultivated by state farms.

Agriculture accounts for 7.5 % of the gross national product (1977) and provides work to half of the economically active population.

In 1975 the Ministry of Agriculture launched a five-year plan with three main objectives —the social transformation of the countryside, modernization of the state and cooperative farms and reduction of the economic imbalance existing between the rural areas and the cities. The outlays for the implementation of this agricultural five-year plan amounted to 2,500,000,000 dollars.

In 1976, a new development plan was initiated for the period until 1980, which envisaged a 7% annual growth of agricultural production through a 25% increase of the area under cultivation.

In order to develop the agricultural infrastructure, the government has invested in the country's irrigation system with the objective of recovering for farming more than 150,000 hectares of semi-arid land and large stretches of the desert. The first project, launched in 1972 and completed four years later, was the construction of a 37 km-long canal carrying the surplus waters of the Tigris to the Euphrates. It was built with Soviet technical assistance. As soon as this canal was built, another such project was launched—a canal to supply water to Lake Zarzal, which is the world's largest artificial body of water, formed in a depression between the Tigris and the Euphrates. This canal will be 63 km long and its construction should take six years. The water of the lake, which is salty, may be desalinated according to experts within a period of not more than six years.

Of all the projects of this kind, which have already been completed or are under construction, the most important is the Thathar Canal which will be twice as deep as the Suez Canal and will be 37.5 km long and 35 to 80 m wide. It will link the Thathar Depression with the Euphrates River.

The agricultural development plans are designed to have agriculture eventually replace the petroleum industry as the No. 1 sector of the Iraqi economy. It was expected that by 1980 Iraq would become self-sufficient in food production, and one of the key objectives of economic development was the construction of a food-processing industry.

In the past decade, Iraq has succeeded in putting more than 130,000 tractors and 8,000 harvesters into operation in its fields, which fact, combined with the traditional fertility of its land and a sufficient supply of water, offers favourable prospects for the future.

The commercially most important agricultural crop is dates which are grown in the central and southern parts of the country. According to FAO figures, Iraq, which posesses some 33 million date palms, i.e. 38% of the world total, produced 578,000 tons of the fruit in 1977.

Other major agricultural products include—according to 1977 data—695,000 tons of wheat, 457,000 tons of barley, 192,200 tons of rice, and in the south also cotton and oil seeds.

In the livestock sector there are 2,550,000 head of cattle and 218,000 buffaloes (which provided in 1977, 49,000 tons of meat), and 11,400,000 sheep and 3,600,000 goats (49,000 tons and meat and 18,000 tons of wool), and 15,923,000 poultry (35,000 tons of meat).

In 1978, some 35,000 tons of fish were netted and in the same year the number of fishing boats doubled.

Between 1976 and 1980, some 3,500,000,000 dollars were invested in the construction of water reservoirs and irrigation systems for a better utilization of water as a key natural resource of the country. In this field, Iraq has received substantial Soviet assistance. It is expected that by 1985, Iraq will have some 3,500,000 hectares of land turned productive by irrigation. The main projects in this respect are being realized in the centre and the south, since the north has a climate with abundant rainfall.

The plans concerning the production of electricity provided for the generation of 4,000 MW in 1980, of which 2,700 MW should be produced by hydro-electric and thermal power plants built with Soviet assistance. Between 1976 and 1980, some 76,000,000 dinars were spent on rural electrification which already benefits about 65% of the peasant population.

According to an official announcement published in 1981, Iraq would invest in that year alone 1,000,000,000 dinars, i.e., 3,100,000,000 dollars in housing construction. Other construction projects planned for that year included a road linking Iraq with Syria and Jordan, 212 secondary roads, 12 hospitals and 27 new bridges.

The five-year plan for the period 1976-1980 provided for a 16.8% growth in the gross national product and a 13.3% increase in per capita income. In 1979 alone, some 10,000,000,000 dollars were spent on economic development.

In the area of foreign trade, Iraq maintains a favourable balance due to its petroleum exports. In 1977, the value of imports was 1,232,000,000 dinars, while non-petroleum exports amounted to 42,000,000 dinars and tons of petroleum to 3,204,000,000 dinars. In that year, Iraq's main commercial partners were France, Italy, Brazil and Great Britain in the export field, and the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Great Britain and France in the area of imports.

The 1980 national budget amounted to 30,028,000,000 dollars. According to 1977 International Monetary Fund data, Iraq's foreign exchange reserves stood at 6,955,000,000 dollars while its 1978 GNP was 22,720,000,000 dollars.

The national currency is the Iraqi dinar whose rate of exchange in 1980 was 2.9 dollars per dinar.

Government: "Iraq is a sovereign people's republic. Its basic objectives are the formation of an Arab state and the construction of a socialist system," as stated in Iraq's provisional constitution adopted in 1968 and amended in 1970 and 1971. This document underlines that the national economy must be directed at the construction of socialism and that social justice must be applied, that all forms of exploitation are prohibited. It also stipulates that the state is the sole owner of the country's resources.

According to the provisional constitution, the supreme authority in the country is the Revolutionary Command Council.

The President and Vice-President are appointed by that Council, the number of whose members is determined by the President who is also the head of state, the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and the president of the Revolutionary Command Council.

The country is administratively divided into eighteen provinces, each headed by a governor who is endowed with considerable administrative powers.

The Kurdistan Autonomy Act, adopted in 1974, established an eighty-member Legislative Council in that region, whose term of office is three years. A provision was also made for the establishment of an Executive Council whose president is a member of the Legislative Council and who is appointed by the President of the Republic. The other members of the Executive Council are called Secretaries General and are actually ministers in charge of specific sectors or affairs of the Kurdistan region. In 1980, the presidents of both the Legislative and Executive Councils of the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan were given the status of ministers in the Iraqi central government.

In May 1980, the first elections were held for the National Assembly of 250 members. There is universal suffrage and a secret ballot. Each member of the National Assembly represents about 50,000 voters. At the same time, elections were held of members of the Legislative Council of the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan.

A Council of Ministers—the cabinet—directly adminsters the affairs of the state.

Armed forces: It is estimated that in 1980 the Iraqi armed forces had more than 200,000 men, 190,000 of them in the army. There is also a small navy and a well-equipped air force. In 1970, a militia called the People's Army was organized throughout the country under the leadership and guidance of the BAATH Party.

Organizations: The main political organization in Iraq is the Arab Socialist BAATH Party, which was founded in 1947 and which has been in power since 1968. In 1973 it proposed to other progressive organizations the formation of a National Patriotic Front. This Front was joined that year by different groups and in 1975 was enlarged through the participation of other political parties, including the Kurdish Democratic Party founded in 1946. Another political group is the Iraqi Communist Party founded in 1934.

There are a number of workers' and social groups, among which the largest is the General Federation of Iraqi Trade Unions, which was established in 1964 and has more than two million members. There is also the General Federation of Iraqi Youth—the youth organization of the BAATH Party—the General Union of Iraqi Workmen, with about 148,000 members, and the General Federation of Peasant Associations.

Education: Iraq has made great efforts in the past decade to promote education in the country. The whole educational system is under state control and education is free at all levels. It is estimated that at the beginning of the 1970s some 60% of the population were illiterate. Since then, a broadly based literacy campaign has been under way, which in 1980 involved more than 2,600,000 individuals, while an additional 2,110,000 individuals were attending schools at different levels. By 1977, the illiteracy rate had been brought down to 19.5%. The number of individuals involved in the regular system of education was 3,646,791 according to a 1980 official report; these included 2,598,052 pupils in primary schools, 356,904 secondary-school students, and 53,420 students attending vocational schools.

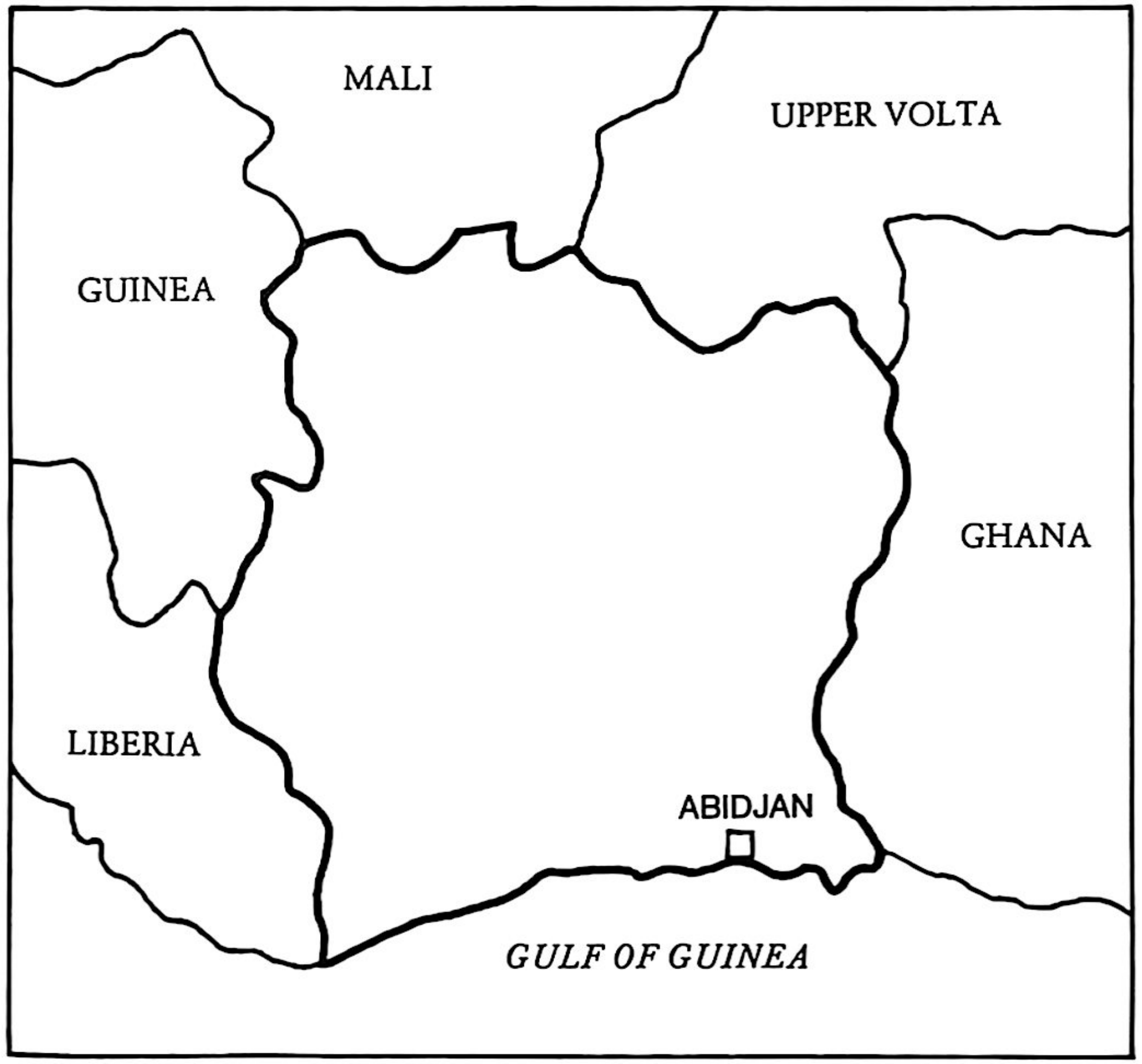
Iraq has six universities: the University of Baghdad, Mustansiya University and the Polytechnic in the capital, the University of Basra in the south, the University of Mosul in the north, and the Sulaimaniya University founded in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan under the Kurdistan Autonomy Act in order to preserve the culture of the Kurds. The number of students enrolled in these higher educational institutions is estimated at more than 80,000.

Public health: Under the second five-year plan (1976-1980), a large sum was earmarked for public-health projects—the construction and expansion of hospital facilities, dispensaries and sanitation centres even in the remotest parts of the country.

In both urban and rural areas, every citizen is entitled to sanitary and medical services irrespective of the cost of the required treatment. Primary attention is being paid to mother and child care facilities. In 1976, there were 194 hospitals in the country with 23,324 beds, i.e. one bed for every 493 inhabitants—a 50% increase compared with 1968. It is estimated that there is one doctor for every 1,740 inhabitants.

Religion: There is freedom of religion in Iraq. Most of the population—approximately 96% according to a 1965 census—are Moslems, both Shia and Sunni. The majority of the Kurds are Sunnis. According to the aforesaid census, Christians make up about 3% of the population, most of them professing Eastern Orthodox rites, including the Uris and Chaldeans. There also exist some other small and unimportant religious communities.

IVORY COAST



Official name: Ivory Coast.
Area: 322,463 sq.km.
Borders: In the north the Ivory Coast borders on Mali and Upper Volta, in the south on the Gulf of Guinea, in the southwest on Liberia, in the east on Ghana, and in the northwest on Guinea.
Population: 7,610,000 inhabitants in 1978. The average rate of population growth in the period 1970-1974 was 2.6%. The principal ethnic groups inhabiting the Ivory Coast are the Agni Baoule, the Kru, the Senufo, and the Malinke.
Capital: Abidjan.
Principal cities: Bouake, Gagnoa.
Languages: French is the official language. Otherwise, different regional languages are spoken, including Kwa.
Public holidays: August 7, Independence Day (1960).
Geography: The Ivory Coast is situated in the Gulf of Guinea, in the western part of Africa. Its topography is characterized by a strip of coastal plain which gradually rises to the north to form a broad plateau some 400 m above sea level. In the west, along the frontier with Liberia and Guinea, are Mt. Tonkou (1,190 m) and Mt. Nimba (1,752).

There are four natural regions—the coastal plain, the equatorial forest zone, the cultivated forest zone, and the northern savanna.

The coastal belt has many lagoons and is covered with equatorial vegetation. Beyond it lies the equatorial forest zone, some 200 km deep and in a triangular form. It is covered with dense forests where the trees are 40 to 60 m tall. The cultivated forest zone is less thickly wooded and has many clearings used mainly for growing coffee and cocoa. This zone lies along the frontier with Ghana and around Baoule. The northern savanna has a widely dispersed population because due to its natural character it is most suitable for cattle raising. About 7,000 sq.km of this area have been turned into the Komoe National Park.

The climate of the Ivory Coast shows marked differences. It is equatorial in the south with constant humidity and periods of heavy rainfall. In the north the temperature is tropical, although the area is exposed to hot and dry winds blowing from the Sahara.

Besides the Cavally River, which flows along the frontier with Liberia, there are other large rivers, such as the Sassandra, the Bandama, and the Komoe, which empty in to the Gulf of Guinea. None of them are navigable for more than 65 km, but are most useful for floating timber.

Brief history: Archaeological exploration has uncovered the remains of man dating from the paleolithic and neolithic eras in different parts of the country, but no connection has been found between these finds and the people inhabiting today's Ivory Coast at the time when the colonizers arrived. The first inhabitants of unknown origin reached its territory in the course of the first millenium A.D. and established predominantly farming communities.

At the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th centuries, the Ivory Coast became known to Europe thanks to mostly Portuguese and French navigators who had reached its coast. In the 17th and 18th centuries, Dutch and French missionaries and sailors established themselves on the coast and without leaving it carried on trade with the native population, especially procuring ivory from elephant tusks, thus also giving the country its name. Development of mining and the plantation economy of America stimulated slave trade.

The advent of the industrial stage of capitalism spurred the Europeans' interest in exploring the African continent for possible raw materials to feed their industries. Between 1830 and 1850, the French admiral Bouet-Villaumez explored the Ivory Coast and in the name of France received from several chieftains pledges of suzerainty. He also established permanent factories on the coast.

Between 1853 and 1868, France obtained possession of the territories of Assinie and Grand Bassam, to which were added the area of Bereby and the banks of the Fresco and San Pedro Rivers. In 1884, when Grand Lahu was joined to the former acquisition, the French possessions in the area covered the territory of the present-day Ivory Coast. In 1889 France established a protectorate over these possessions and in 1893 turned them into a colony with Captain Binger becoming its first Governor.

However, rebel tribes in the interior, which already formed a part of the then French West Africa, could not be subdued until 1912.

In 1944, a medical assistant and traditional chief descended from a family of planters, Felix Houphouet-Boigny, founded the African Agricultural Trade Union. In 1945, he was elected to the French National Assembly. In 1946, the African Agricultural Union was transformed into the Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast (PDCI). In the same year, the Democratic African Union (RDA) was formed and Boigny became its president and leader of its right wing for the next decade. The PDCI operated as the local section of the RDA.

In 1956, Boigny was appointed government minister in Paris and held this post for the next three years until his return to the Ivory Coast. It was in the same year when, together with the Frenchman Gaston Deferre, he drew up the well-known Framework Law, under which internal autonomy was gradually granted to the French colonial territories.

In 1958, the Ivory Coast was proclaimed an Autonomous Republic associated with the French Community, and Boigny was appointed its Premier. A year later, the Ivory Coast, together with Dahomey (present-day Benin), Niger and Upper Volta, formed a Council of Entente, which was later joined by Togo.

The independence of the Ivory Coast was proclaimed on August 7, 1960, and Boigny became the country's President.

In 1973, the government announced that it had uncovered a plot to overthrow it and to assassinate the President. This led to the arrest of hundreds of persons and then to a number of trials in which 13 men, mostly army officers, were sentenced to death. Another group of opponents was sentenced to forced labour and still others to prison terms.

In its external policy, the government of the Ivory Coast is pursuing a pro-Western line and maintains close ties with the former metropolitan power, France.

At the beginning of the 1970s, the Ivory Coast supported moves by the most reactionary African governments for a rapprochement with the racist South African regime. This policy of "dialogue with South Africa", sponsored by the United States and France, dismally failed.

In keeping with its foreign-policy line, the government of the Ivory Coast has been supporting French neo-colonialist policy in Africa, it opposed the liberation of Angola and aided the Zairean government during the uprising in Shaba province. It also supported the French intervention in the war waged by the Saharoui people. This policy was reaffirmed when French President Valery Giscard d'Estaing visited the Ivory Coast in January 1978.

In recent years, the United States has accelerated its penetration of the Ivory Coast and has replaced France in some sectors of its national economy. In November 1975, Houphouet-Boigny was re-elected President. Some student groups, workers, tribal groups and politicians excluded from power oppose the ideology and the economic orientation of the government. At the beginning of 1979, some violence occurred against the French population of the Ivory Coast and 500 French troops were sent to Abidjan airport to secure a rapid evacuation of the French residents, if it were needed.

In May 1980, a coup by the military was frustrated, and in September of the same year, Houphouet-Boigny proclaimed a "change within the establishment"—a move that brought about the fall of the man who was thought to be his successor, Philippe Yace, the chairman of the National Assembly and Secretary General of the ruling Democratic Party —and announced elections for the National Assembly. Until then, 143 members of the Assembly had been directly appointed by the President.

Presidential elections were held in Ocotber 1980, and the only candidate, Houphouet-Boigny, was re-elected for a term of five years. Elections of a new National Assembly took place in November, and the number of the Assembly members was raised to 147. Henri Konan Bedie was elected the Assembly's chairman. The same month, municipal elections were held and on February 2, 1981, a new cabinet change was effected, but the principal ministers retained in their posts.

Economy: The mainstay of the national economy is agriculture, which is being pursued on 8,887,000 hectares of the total area of 31,800,000 hectares by 81% of the economically active population, estimated to number 2,302,000 in 1970. According to FAO data, they produced in 1978: 19,000 tons of copra, 38,000 tons of palm kernels, 51,000 tons of cotton seed and 37,000 tons of cotton fibre, 50,000 tons of peanuts, 2,000 tons of sesame, 178,000 tons of bananas, 245,000 tons of pineapple, 318,000 tons of coffee (the Ivory coast is Africa's leading producer of this commodity), 275,000 tons of cocoa (as Africa's third largest producer), 45,000 tons of millet, 430,000 tons of rice, 35,000 tons of sorghum, 325,000 tons of maize, and 43,000 tons of sugar cane.

The forests produced 10,682,000 cu.m of timber in 1977, and rubber plantations 17,520 tons of latex.

The livestock sector included in 1978, 680,000 head of cattle, 1,100,000 sheep, 1,150,000 goats, and 250,000 pigs.

The 1977 fish catch was 834,000 tons.

The mining industry produced 41,000 metric carats of diamonds in 1977, and there are important deposits of iron ore, which are still unexploited.

The manufacturing industry produces textiles, cordage, palm oil (185,000 tons), tinned goods, and foodstuffs. In addition, 1,212,000,000 kWh of electric power were produced, just as 62,000 tons of fertilizers, 875,000 tons of cement (1977), 6,800 motor vehicles, and 31,000 bicycles (also 1977). Discovered petroleum reserves were estimated to represent 400,000 tons of annual production in 1980. The Ivory Coast has 49 ships with the total capacity of 119,215 registered tons.

According to available data, the 1978 GNP amounted to 6,580,000,000 dollars and the per capita GNP 840 dollars. The 1978 balance of trade closed with a surplus of 1,865,000,000 CFA francs, when exports (34% of them made up of coffee), worth 524,380,000,000 CFA francs, exceeded 522,515,000,000 CFA francs worth of imports. The national budget for the fiscal year 1979 was balanced at 277,400,000,000 CFA francs. The foreign-exchange reserves of the Ivory Coast in 1977 amounted to 185,700,000 dollars and its public foreign debt in 1975 to 973,800,000 dollars, according to World Bank figures. The cost-of-living in 1977 had risen to 206.4% of that in 1970. The national currency is the CFA franc whose rate of exchange in May 1978 was 230.4 per U.S. dollar.

A characteristic feature of the economic policy pursued by the Ivory Coast is free access for foreign capital, mainly French, which controls a major part of the country's natural resources and industry.

Government: The Ivory Coast has a republican form of government of the presidential type. Presidential elections, based on universal suffrage, are held every five years. Since the proclamation of independence of the Ivory Coast in 1960, the presidential office has been held by Felix Houphouet-Boigny. The executive power is vested in the President who personally appoints the cabinet whose members may not be members of the National Assembly and are accountable to him only. Legislative power is held by the National Assembly of 147 members elected for a term of five years. Their election coincides with the presidential election. Bills may be tabled by the President or by any member of the National Assembly. The Assembly's jurisdiction includes the appointment of a Supreme Judiciary Council. Judicial power is vested in the President who is assisted by the Supreme Judiciary Council.

The Economic and Social Council is an advisory body chaired by the President and consisting of forty-five members.

Armed Forces: In July 1979, 4,500 men served in the army, 200 in the air force, and 250 in the navy. The National Gendarmerie has an additional 3,000 men. The government has signed a number of military-assistance agreements with France, which legitimize the presence of French troops in the country. France is also the main supplier of weapons, military equipment and military instructors to the Ivory Coast.

Organizations: The only legitimate political party in the Ivory Coast is the ruling Democratic Party. Its chairman is Felix Houphouet-Boigny. The only officially permitted trade union organization is the National Centre of Ivory Coast Workers, which has some 85,000 members and is government-controlled. However, the labour movement has been deeply permeated—in a clandestine form—by the most radical trends in the African trade-union movement, and the government is tenaciously persecuting their advocates. The General Union of Black African Workers has branches in the Ivory Coast.

Culture, education and sports: Manifestations of traditional culture are deeply ingrained among the people. The Senufo ethnic group is characterized by the treatment and conservation of animal heads, the Talla people are known for their decorative doors with themes taken from traditional mythology, as well as for their love of the traditional dances accompanied by the rhythm of drums and the xylophone. On the other hand, the Baoule people are known for their masks, fine and attractive gold jewellery, and carved wooden scultpures representing popular heroes and heroines.

Primary education is based on the French model. The government has set curricula for those pupils who do not want to continue studying at secondary schools after having completed their primary education, and has established centres for practical training in different skills.

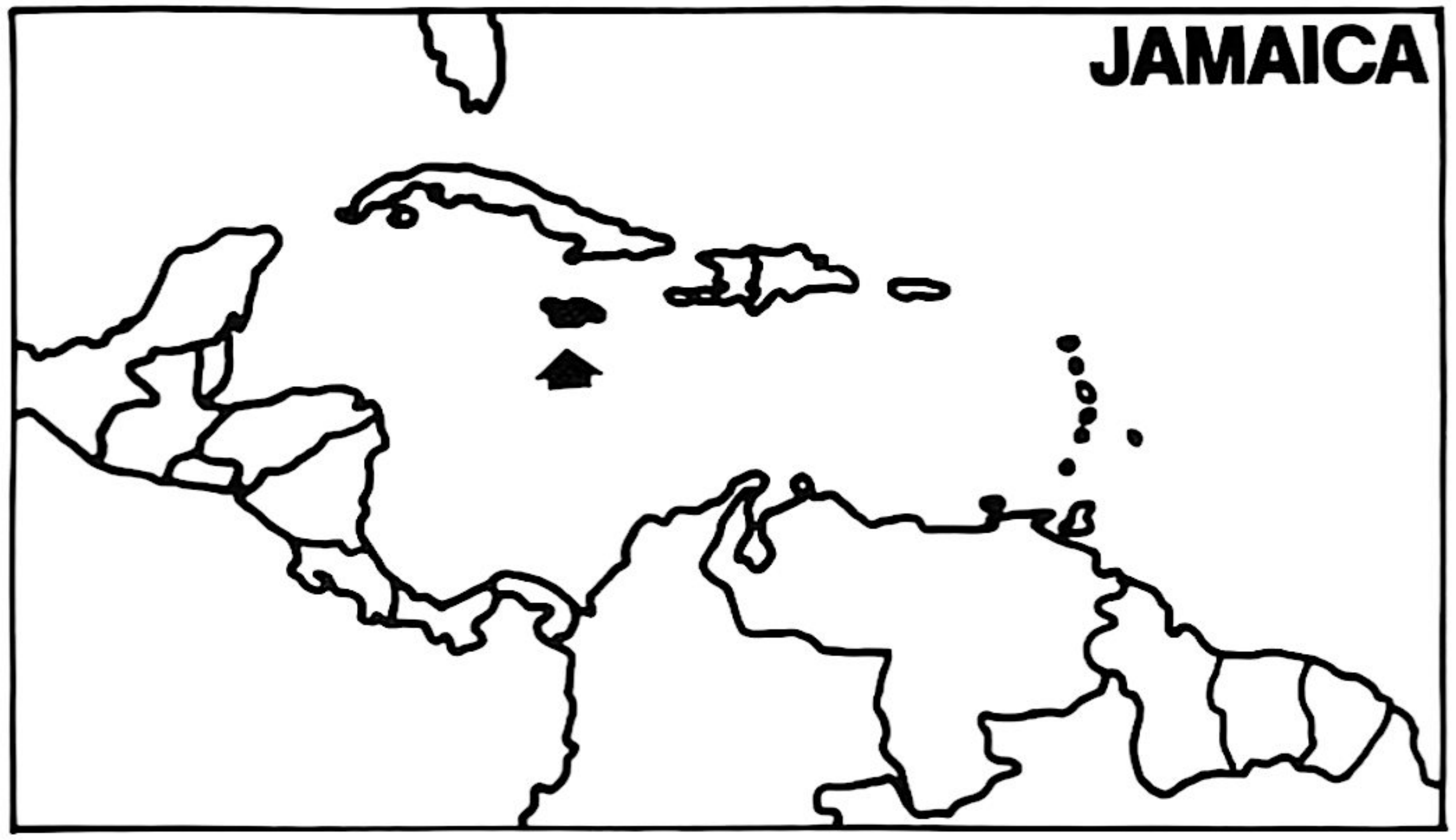
Educational television was introduced in primary education in 1970. 20.5% of primary school-age children attend private schools. Admission to secondary schools is based on competitive examinations. In the 1972-1973 term, only 12,570 out of 61,059 candidates were admitted. There are two types of secondary education—a brief course and a long, minority-oriented course *(baccalaureat)*. Nevertheless, 45% of the population of the Ivory Coast are illiterate. In 1962, only 40% of children of school age attended primary schools. 3% of boys and girls in the appropriate age group attend secondary schools.

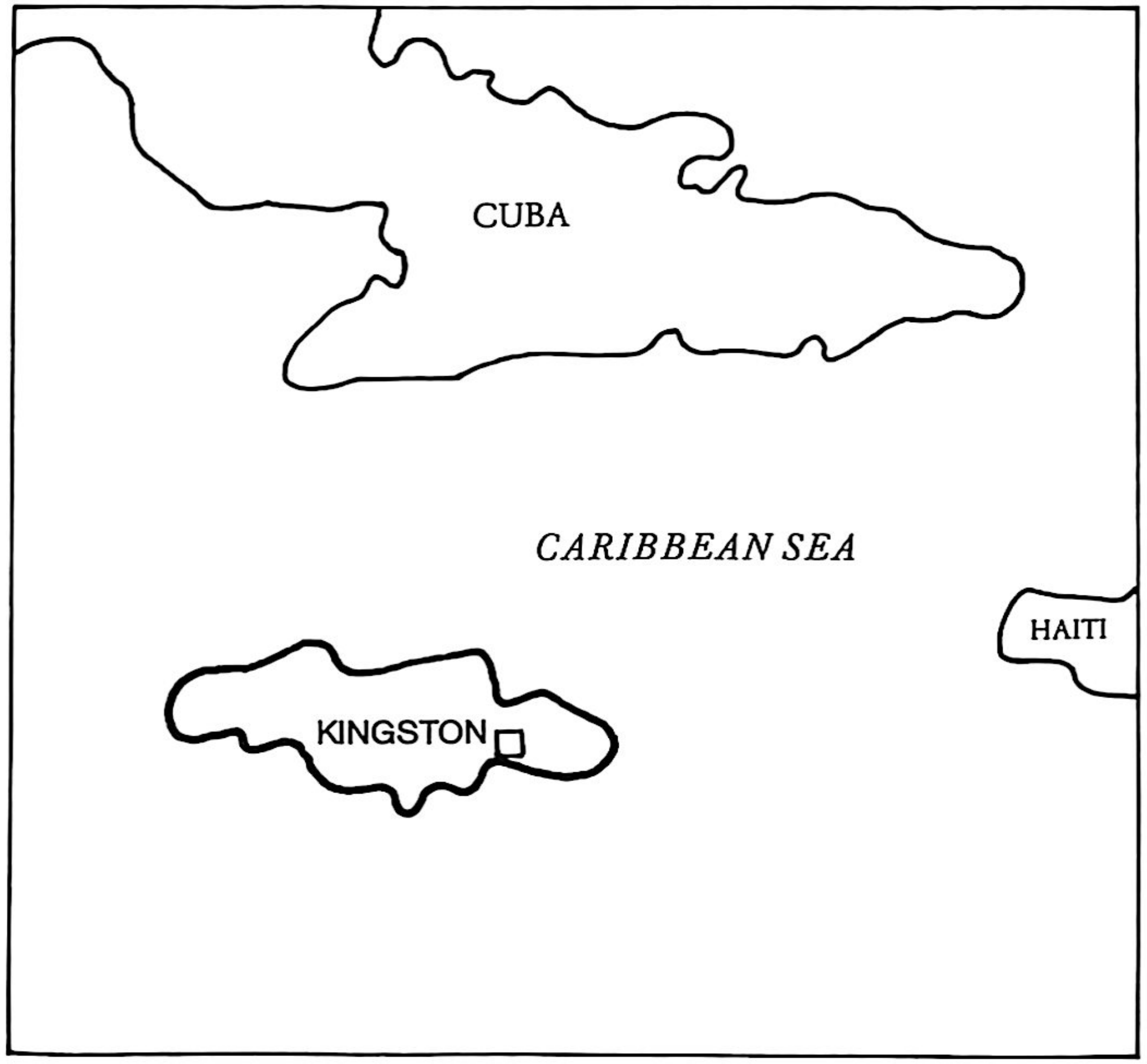
The University of Abidjan, the only one in the country, was opened in 1964. In the 1978-1979 term it had 10,000 students. Other students attend institutions of higher learning in France.

The national sport is football, but athletics and table tennis are also quite popular.

Religion: 65% of the population practice traditional cults and 23% are Moslems. 8.5% are Roman Catholics and 3.5% profess other Christian creeds.

JAMAICA




CUBA
CARIBBEAN SEA
HAITI
KINGSTON

Official name: Jamaica.
Area: 10,962 sq.km.
Borders: Jamaica is an island in the Caribbean Sea, 140 km south of Cuba.
Population: 2,173,000 inhabitants. Annual growth of population is 1.7%. 80% of the population is of African origin and the rest is of Chinese, Lebanese, Syrian, East Indian, European and mixed origin.
Capital: Kingston (500,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Jamaica is divided into three counties and 14 regions. Kingston is the principal city and also one of the island's principal ports. The other towns include Montego Bay, which is the main tourist centre, Spanish Town, the old capital, Mandeville, the centre of bauxite extraction, and Port Antonio, the main of Jamaica's six ports. The others include Port Morant, Portland Bay and Savannah-la-Mar.
Languages: English is the official language, but there is also a dialect based on English. The second language is Spanish. Much less spoken are Chinese and Hindi, which are used by some members of the two communities.
Public holidays: August 6, Independence Day (1962), which is celebrated every first Monday in August.
Geography: Jamaica is a part of the Greater Antilles in the Caribbean Sea. It is mostly mountainous with two principal ranges—the Blue Mountains in the east and the Devil's Mountains in the north. Some of the peaks exceed 5,000 feet. the highest of them, the Blue Mountain Peak, reaches 7,402 feet above sea level. The Siguanea plain lies on the southern coast, and it is there where the most important towns are to be found. There are many small rivers, some of them navigable over short stretches by small boats, and many mineral springs. The island is not greatly affected by hurricanes and its climate varies according to altitude. It is tropical at sea level and temperate in the mountains. The driest month is February and the most humid one is October. Jamaica lies in a seismic zone but has not experienced an earthquake since 1907.
Brief history: The earliest inhabitants of the island were the Arawaks who called it Xayamaca, which means "land of the springs"—and it is from this Arawak term that Jamaica is derived. These original inhabitants of the island were exterminated by the *conquista.* Columbus discovered Jamaica during his second voyage, in May 1494. The first Spanish settlement was established there in 1509, and eight years later the first African slaves were brought. Sugar cane, as the principal crop, was introduced in 1640.

In 1655, the British conquered Jamaica and drove out the Spaniards. They turned the island into a refuge for pirates and buccaneers, whose centre of operations was the town of Port Royal. In 1662, the British Crown imposed a constitution on Jamaica, based on own model—a Governor, an appointed Council and elected Assembly. The capital was Spanish Town.

Great Britain and Spain argued over the possession of Jamaica for more than a century and a half. In 1670 by the Treaty of Madrid, Spain ceded the island to Britain on the condition that attacks on the remaining Spanish possessions in the Antilles would be stopped. Three years later, the first census was taken in Jamaica and it showed that the island had 17,272 inhabitants. Irish, Scottish and Jewish colonists began settling there, bringing with them their African slaves. The Spaniards who had stayed were gradually expelled from the island. Fugitive slaves rebelled in 1740, but were brutally suppressed.

The 18th century was a period of great economic prosperity in Jamaica under full British control. In 1795, another major rebellion of fugitive slaves who were hiding in the mountains took place. As the slave traffic grew, so did the frequency of the rebellions.

In 1834, Great Britain was forced to decree the abolition of slavery. A Jamaican police force was formed and an apprentice system was introduced.

The visit to Jamaica by Simon Bolivar, the Great Liberator, in 1816, was a historical event.

The privileged in Jamaica opposed the abolition of slavery with all their resources, and this resulted in some bloody fighting. An outstanding figure in this respect was the nobleman George William Gordon, who led an emancipation movement in Mourant Bay in 1865. Gordon and a group of popular leaders of the struggle for freedom were captured and executed. The same fate befell another national hero, Paul Bogle.

Marcus Garvey (1887-1940) was another outstanding Jamaican hero whose struggle and influence extended beyond the national frontiers. At the time when racial discrimination against blacks had reached one of its peaks, Garvey fought for the dignity of man in the United States and other countries.

In 1845, the first group of immigrants from India arrived on the island to work mainly on the construction of the first Jamaican railway line. In 1866, Great Britain officially confirmed the colonial status of the island and in 1872 moved the capital to Kingston.

The changes in the system of exploitation had an immediate impact on the island's economy. Great Britain introduced free trade in 1848, which abolished the privileges earlier extended to exports of Jamaican sugar. The shortage of cheap labour increased and to remedy the situation a contingent of Chinese immigrants was brought in to work on the plantations. The growth of economic problems was paralleled by the development of an independence movement. However, the wave of the independence struggle, which had swept the American continent in the 18th and 19th centuries, did not reach Jamaica. In 1892 and 1894, Jose Marti, the apostle of Cuban freedom, visited Jamaica where Major General Antonio Maceo, his mother Mariana Grajales, and Generalissimo Maximo Gomez also lived in exile.

During the last decades of the 19th century, cultivation of bananas for export was introduced.

However, the world-wide economic crisis of capitalism in the 1930s also affected Jamaica, causing great misery to the poorest inhabitants of the country. In 1927, Garvey returned to Jamaica and began to spread there his thoughts about the conscience of the blacks.

A Constitutional reform was found necessary, and talks were initiated in this respect between representatives of the different sectors of the country's population. These talks, in which also the Governor-General took part, continued until 1943, and a year later a new constitution was promulgated, which introduced universal suffrage. In 1943, too, elections were held, in which a smashing victory was scored by the Jamaican Labour Party led by the noted trade unionist Alexander Bustamante who is considered a national hero together with Norman Manley.

Five years earlier, in 1938, modern trade unionism grew out of riots and general unrest caused by bad economic and social conditions.

Four years later, the University of the West Indies was founded in Kingston for students from the islands of the Eastern Caribbean, providing courses relevant to the area's history and present. In 1952, commercial extraction of bauxite began, which has grown since then to become one of the main branches of the Jamaican economy.

In 1953, a ministerial system was established, providing for the assumption by the ministers of executive duties, and later, in 1957, Great Britain granted Jamaica the status of "internal autonomy", retaining full control of defence matters and foreign affairs. The Governor-General continued to be head of state.

Elections in 1955 and 1959 brought victory to the People's National Party of Norman

Manley. With the consolidation of the party in power, Jamaicans began to strive for the independence of their country. In 1958, Jamaica joined the West Indian Federation which, however, soon disintegrated. In a referendum held in 1961, Jamaica voted against staying in the Federation and in favour of national independence.

As a logical consequence of the national movement, Jamaica attained that goal on August 6, 1962, becoming independent within the framework of the British Commonwealth. It also joined the United Nations and other international organizations.

In spite of the popularity of the PNP, the Labour Party gained control of the government in 1962 and held it for ten years, in the course of which the capitalist penetration of the country grew, just as the social differences within the population. Among other moves, Jamaica proposed in 1969 the formation of the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA) and joined the Organization of American States, the OAS.

However, in 1972, as the result of important elections, a major turn occurred with the victory of the PNP, whose leader Michael Manley (the son of the party's founder) became Prime Minister.

Under Manley's leadership, the PNP launched a programme designed to achieve social equality, liquidation of unemployment, growth of the living standard of the Jamaican people, as well as protection of the country's natural resources and their recovery from the control by foreign monopolies. In 1973, together with Guyana, Jamaica signed the agreement establishing the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), an economic integration organization of the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean area.

Manley's independent and popular policy provoked open hostility from the United States government and the Jamaican right, which launched a destablization campaign aimed at frustrating the plans of economic, political and social development announced by the PNP. In 1974, Jamaica proposed the formation of an International Bauxite Association (IBA) which would regulate the operations and price-setting of bauxite-mining operations.

Jamaica became the victim of economic blockades, suspension of financial credits and defamatory campaigns, including assassinations of its leaders. Acts of sabotage were also committed against specific branches of the national economy. A climate of violence was created, which reached its most critical point in the first half of 1976, on the eve of the elections set for December of that year. The Manley government was forced to proclaim a state of emergency. Nevertheless, the Jamaicans expressed their massive support of the PNP in those elections as well as in the local elections held in March 1977. The PNP then held a solid majority in parliament (47 of the 60 seats).

Politically strengthened, the Manley government exerted great efforts to achieve economic recovery and launched an ambitious programme of economic and social improvements, which enjoyed popular support. Moreover, it initiated nationalization of the basic branches of the national economy.

At the beginning of 1977, the Jamaican state gained majority control of four of the island's largest mining enterprises, the administration of five of its twelve sugar mills, and of a part of the important tourist industry. It instituted workers' participation in enterprise mangement, diversified the markets for Jamaican products, and revitalized production.

In spite of the continued threat from the right to revive the period of violence, the state of emergency was lifted in the middle of 1977. At the end of that year, the drafting of a new constitution was discussed, which would permit the establishment of a republic to replace the still-existing constitutional monarchy as the country's system of government. Although not realized, the proposal called for the institution of a presidential regime as well as for reforms in the parliament and in the electoral system.

Under the Manley government, Jamaica pursued a foreign policy of identification with regional and international cooperation organizations. Jamaica established relations with many countries and played an active role in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and in other international forums. Manley distinguished himself in the struggle for a new international economic order.

However, the political polarization inside the country, just as the threat of destabilization, increased at the turn of 1978, when the Manley government decided to cut relations with the International Monetary Fund which had raised very negative conditions for the granting of credits. From then on, the Labour Party, led by the present Prime Minister, Edward Seaga, stepped up its policy of confrontation with the PNP. Frustrated in the economic sphere, the PNP made tremendous efforts to obtain financing which would permit recovery from the situation that had been created. Moreover, it had to cope with a rising wave of violence spurred by an anti-Communist campaign. By the end of 1980, when premature elections were held, more than 600 persons had been killed. The involvement of an important station of the CIA was disclosed and it had to scale down its size. Also frustrated was an attempted coup by some members of Jamaica's Defence Force. Assassination attempts were made against political leaders, including Michael Manley himself.

Under these circumstances, Seaga's Labour Party won the elections, capturing approximately 53% of the vote against the PNP's 41%. However, in view of the electoral system patterned on the British system, these results gave the Labour Party the overwhelming majority of the parliamentary seats—51 of the total of 60.

The Labour Party promised a government dedicated to the economic recovery of the country, for which purpose it began negotiations with the International Monetary Fund and other international credit institutions controlled by the United States, and urged private business to invest in the country.

Economy: Given its economic structure combining vestiges of its still recent colonial past with modern capitalist production, Jamaica is facing serious economic problems. The island is a less developed country whose economy is based on the mining industry, agriculture and tourism.

Bauxite extratction began in Jamaica in 1950, when the Reynolds Metal Co. initiated the shipment of the ore to the United States. The same company also appropriated the best land. In 1977, Jamaica produced more than 11.5 million tons of bauxite, which made the isalnd the world's third largest exporter of this mineral, surpassed only by Australia and Guinea. State participation in this industry increased after 1976, when the government bought 51% of the shares of ALCOA and subsequently signed a similar agreement with the Kaiser Aluminium Company. Negotiations then followed with other foreign corporations—Revere, ALCAN and ALPART. In spite of the significance of the mining industry in the Jamaican economy, only some 10,000 workers are employed in it (i.e. 1.2% of the total labour force).

Jamaican agriculture has been declining in importance in recent decades. It is mainly based on the production of sugar cane. Nevertheless, agriculture employs one third of the economically active population. Cultivated land represents 23.7% of the island's territory. Sugar cane as the principal crop is followed in importance by bananas, which are also exported. Other crops include citrus fruit, cocoa, coffee cinnamon, and coconuts.

The industrial sector is made up basically of food-processing, manufacture of aloholic beverages, textiles, chemicals and metals, as well as the production of aluminium. Industry employs some 32% of the labour force.

The tourist industry is Jamaica's second largest earner of foreign exchange. For the already described political reasons, tourism declined in the country during several years of the Manley government, due to foreign press campaigns and the internal violence. Some 12,000 people make their living in this sector.

One of the biggest and most serious problems Jamaica is facing is a decline of its foreign-exchange reserves. The unemployment rate is estimated at more than 23%.

Government: Jamaica has a parliamentary system of government made up of a House of Representatives and a Senate of 60 popularly elected and 21 appointed members respectively. In both cases their term of office is five years.

Being a member of the Commonwealth, Jamaica has a Governor-General—Florizel Glasspole—who represents the British Crown. The Cabinet is headed by a Prime Minister—Edward Seaga—who is the head of government.

The island is divided into 60 electoral districts, each represented by a member of parliament in the House of Representatives. It is the House which draws up legislation which is then debated in the Senate.

Armed forces: The Prime Minister is at the same time Minister of Defence. Jamaica's Defence Force, established in 1962, has 1,500 regulars supplemented by a national reserve of officer volunteers. There is also a Police Corps of close to 4,000 men and women.

Organizations: Two politcal parties have held power in the history of Jamaica—the People's National Party (PNP) of Michael Manley, and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) of Edward Seaga. Although they undoubtedly wield the major influence in Jamaican politics, there also exist some other minor political groups. There are more than fourteen trade unions. The two most important ones are the National Workers' Union and the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union; the former is associated with the PNP, the latter with the JLP.

A new progressive force has emerged and grown in Jamaica in recent years—the Workers' Party of Jamaica (WJP) led by Professor Trevor Monroe, which, however, is not represented in parliament.

Culture, education and sport: Although it has rich sources of traditions, art in Jamaica could not prosper in a climate of direct foreign domination; but a nationalist spirit has recently emerged. Nevertheless, in the period 1930-1940, Jamaican cultural expression began to flourish, giving the nation a type of art in which the native element prevails over foreign influences. An example in this respect is "reggae" music, an authentic Jamaican rhythm. The first Caribbean Festival of Arts—CARIFESTA—was held in Jamaica in 1972, followed by another one in Guyana in 1974, and a third one in Cuba in 1979. There, the Jamaican cultural expressions are re-affirmed through the cultural and historical identity of the peoples of the Caribbean area.

Education is provided in both state and private schools. The educational law envisages pre-school, primary, secondary, vocational and higher education, as well as teachers' training and scholarships. The University of West Indies is located at Mona and has faculties of the humanities, social studies, law, medicine, and the sciences. Its student body of some 3,000 comes from the whole region.

Under the Manley government, a literacy campaign was put into effect and new schools were built. It is estimated that some 35 to 40% of the population above the age of fifteen are illiterate.

Cricket, athletics, football and tennis are the most popular sports in Jamaica.

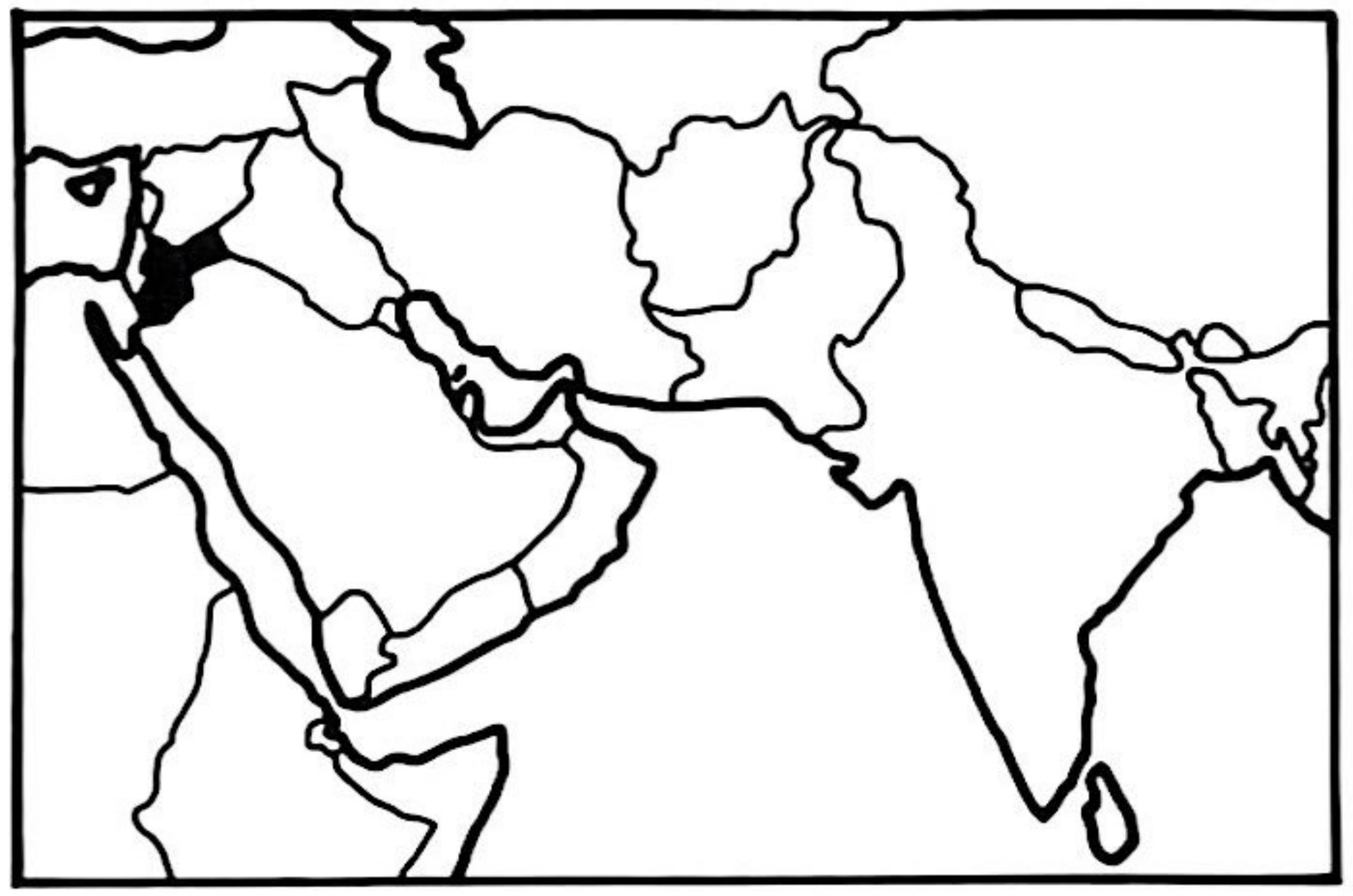
Public health: Medical services are provided in 21 general hosptials, six specialized hospitals and a university hospital, in additon to 150 health centres and dispensaries. There are also private medical clinics. In 1974, the infant mortality rate was 25.9 per thousand live-born babies. There are internationalist-minded Cuban doctors working in the public health sector under a cooperation agreement with Jamaica.

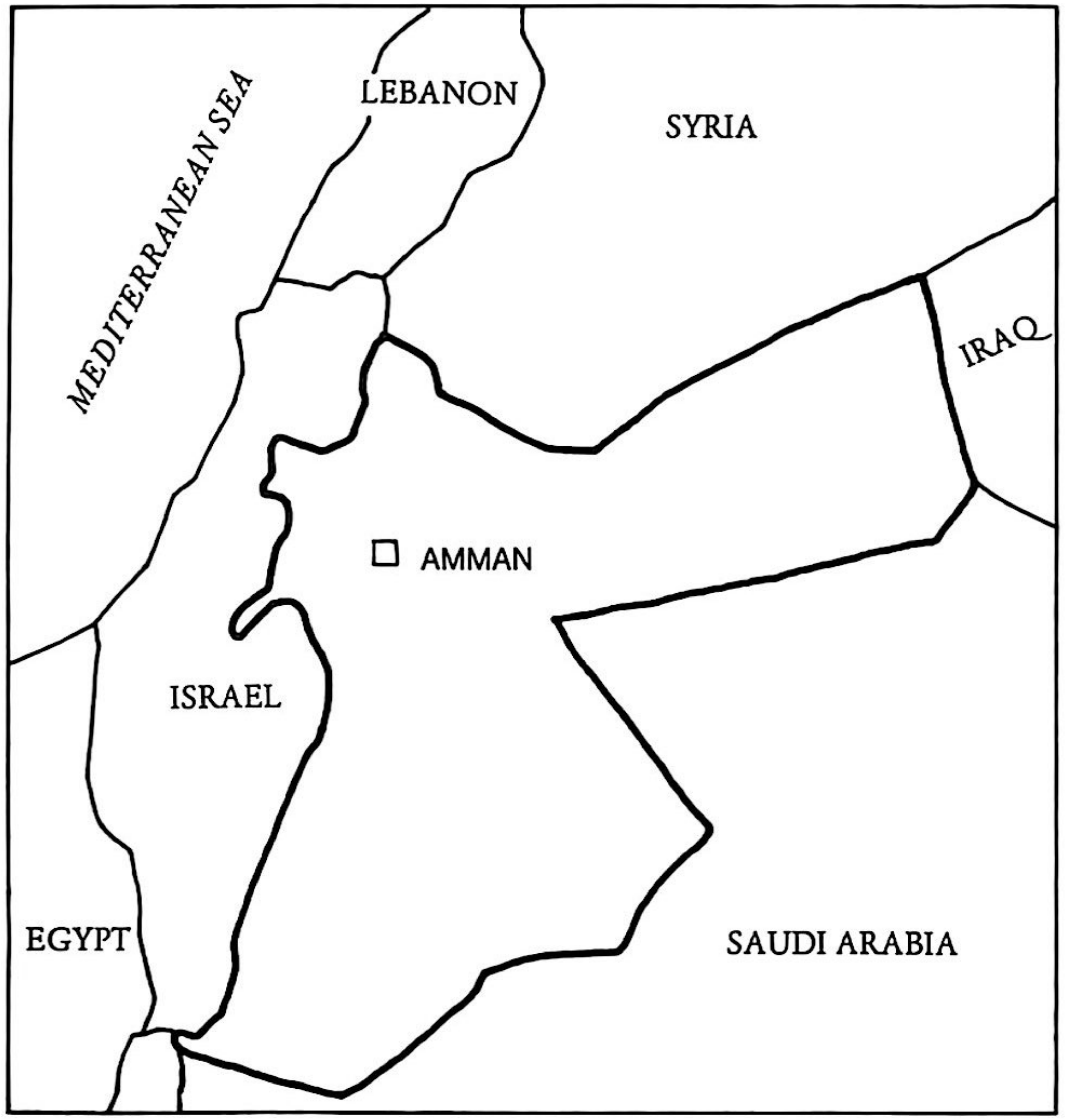
Religion: There is freedom of religion in Jamaica. The majority of the population are Christians, but other religions such as Judaism, Hinduism, Islam and Bahai are also officially recognized.

Among the Christian creeds the most widespread are Anglicans, Baptists, the Disciples of Christ, Methodists, Moravians, Roman Catholics, Presbyterians and Congregationalists (the United Church).

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church was officially established in Jamaica in 1970, and there is also the Rastafari cult with some 30,000 followers, whose music and customs have a deep influence on the country's social life.

JORDAN




LEBANON
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SYRIA
IRAQ
AMMAN
ISRAEL
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA

Official name: The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.
Area: 97,740 sq.km, including the West Bank region (6,530 sq.km) occupied by Israel since 1967.
Borders: In the west, Jordan borders on Israel, in the north on Syria, in the east on Iraq and Saudi Arabia on which it also borders in the south. In the extreme southwest it has a narrow outlet to the Red Sea through the Gulf of Aqaba on which it has a port of the same name.
Population: According to United Nations figures, the number of inhabitants was 3,085,000 in 1979. Rural population constitutes 28% of the total. The annual rate of population growth is 3.4%. The West Bank, occupied by Israel, is inhabited by more than 650,000 Palestinians.
Capital: Amman (850,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Zarqa and Irbid.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: May 25, Independence Day (1946), and November 14, the King's Birthday (1935).
Geography: The only fertile area depends for irrigation on the Jordan River and its short tributaries, as well as on the Dead Sea, all of which form a deep valley which is considered to be the lowest depression on our planet.

Jordan has only about 10,700 sq.km of arable land, most of it located on the West Bank. The climate is dry and subtropical, influenced by the Mediterranean and the continent. In the interior of the country there are several oases suitable for cultivation.

Brief history: Jordan is predominantly a desert country. However, since the Jordan River basin was attractive for settlement, the region has been populated from the most remote, ancient times. The Moabites and Amorites who settled in the region east of the river, were successively dominated by the Arabs, the Ptolemies, the Seleucids, the Jews, the Romans, and the Byzantines. Finally, in the 7th century A.D., the Arabs invaded the region and established there their domain. Then came the Crusaders, and part of the area was annexed to their Kingdom of Jerusalem. In 1188, the Arabs drove out the Crusaders and Palestine became a part of Egypt until the 16th century when the whole territory was incorporated into the vast Ottoman Empire.

The British penetrated the area in the middle of the 19th century and in the course of World War I supported the Arab revolt against the Turks who were allied with Germany. The Hashemite family became a close British ally, and Hussein Ibn Ali a promoter of British interests. As the leader of several Arab tribes and with British assistance, Hussein drove the Turks out.

At that time, the region was a part of Syria which, in turn, had become a French mandate after World War I. In 1920, the French dethroned King Faisal of Syria, who was Hussein's son, but the British installed him on the Iraqi throne. Hussein's other son, Abdullah, was offered rule over the country east of the Jordan River, which was a desert area belonging to Palestine and was known as Transjordan. The British Crown wanted thereby to win an Arab ally in this area.

Britain administered jointly Palestine and Transjordan with Abdullah as Emir. His troops operated in the area together with the Allies during World War II. In 1945, Transjordan took part in the establishment of the Arab League and in 1948 in the first war with Israel.

As a result of this conflict, which prevented the formation of the Arab state envisaged in the United Nations plan for the partitioning of Palestine, Transjordan extended its administration to the West Bank of the Jordan River, which is inhabited mainly by Palestinians. Its territory of more than 6,000 sq.km belongs to historical Palestine.

In 1946, Great Britain conceded independence to the country which subsequently took the name of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Abdullah continued to head the new state as king. On July 20, 1951, he was assassinated in the Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. He was said to have had secret negotiations with Israel.

He was succeeded to the throne for a short time by his son Talal. But in August 1952, after having been declared by the National Assembly inept to rule the country, he ceded the crown to his son Hussein who ascended to the throne on May 2, 1953, following a brief period of regency by his uncle, Nasser Ibn Jemil, during which the young monarch was completing his education at the British military academy at Sandhurst.

Thus began the period of the reign of King Hussein who is today the longest-ruling head of an Arab state and whose almost three decades at the head of Jordan have been marked by a policy of considerable vaccilation both as regards the Arab-Israeli conflict and his relations with the Palestinian resistance movement whose large presence on Jordanian territory, together with Jordan's proximity to Israel, make the country a key piece on the political chessboard of the Middle East.

Hussein rules his country with absolute power. The 1952 constitution grants him great authority, including the exercising of executive power, which he does by his own decrees or through ministers appointed by him. He also has the right to dissolve the parliament—as he did in November 1974—and to appoint all civilian and military officials, while holding the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces.

During his long reign, Jordan has passed through many political crises. After the assassination of his grandfather, King Abdullah, the progressive forces and particularly the Palestinians living on Jordanian territory, were subjected to a severe campaign of repression, which included the adoption of anti-Communist laws.

In 1954, the opposition formed a National Front led by Suleiman Naboulsi, head of the National Socialist Party. The next year, Jordan's intended entry into the Baghdad Pact provoked a strong popular opposition which forced the formation of a new government, which promised not to participate in that Pact. In 1956, Glubb Pasha was dismissed as commander of the famous Arab Legion. In the same year, Jordan did not take part in the new Arab-Israeli war, although the strong Arab nationalist sentiments generated by that conflict precipitated the British withdrawal from Jordanian territory and the abrogation of the 1948 treaty between Jordan and Great Britain, which was rejected by many strata of the population.

Between 1956 and 1957, there was a brief period when the government of Suleiman Naboulsi was strongly influenced by Nasserite ideas, and in April 1957, Hussein succeeded in suppressing an uprising in which some elements of the armed forces, who wanted to establish a republic participated.

During this crisis, the Saudis helped the Hashemite monarchy. When the United Arab Republic (UAR) was founded by Syria and Egypt in February 1958, Jordan broke off relations with both these countries and formed a union with Iraq, whose King Faisal was Hussein's cousin. The union came to an end with the fall of the monarchy in Iraq.

While the nationalist wave which had swept the Arab world in those years brought about the landing in Lebanon of U.S. Marines at the request of President Camille Chamoun, King Hussein at the same time called in June 1958 for the presence of British troops which were indeed sent to his kingdom.

In 1961, Jordan concluded a political and military treaty with Saudi Arabia. The period between that year and 1966 saw Jordan's gradual rapprochement with a number of Arab countries, including the Egypt of Gamal Abdel Nasser who was trying to forge Arab unity in the face of the Israeli threat. Inside Jordan, there was a change of several cabinets, which indicated a continuance of the instability typical of the political situation in the country. In July 1966, the police arrested in Amman many nationalists, Nasserites, Baathists and Communists on charges of preparing a coup. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was also affected, when Jordan suspended the aid it was to provide to the PLO as a part of the common effort of the Arab countries in this respect.

In May 1967, as a new Arab-Israeli war became imminent, Jordan signed a mutual defence treaty with Egypt which, in turn, was tied to Syria by a similar document.

In the third war with Israel, in June 1967, Jordan lost its rule over a part of Jerusalem, the Israelis occupied the West Bank of the Jordan River, and more than 200,000 refugees were driven onto the eastern bank of the river. Three months later, Hussein accepted Resolution 242 of the U.N. Security Council, which provides for a solution of the deep crisis produced by the Israeli aggession, even though the document has not been accepted by several parties to the conflict.

The large influx of Palestinian refugees into Jordanian territory and the fight against Israel which was waged from there in the years to follow, produced great friction with the Jordanian monarchy.

In April 1957 the king decided to ban the activities of all political parties, a move which provoked strong reation from the progressive opposition. In spite of an agreement signed with the PLO, Jordan seemed to favour the Rogers Plan, a United States project of a partial solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, which was opposed by the Palestinian forces and by different Arab countries.

Between September 17 and 27, 1970, the Jordanian armed forces waged a virtual military campaign against the Palestinian presence on Jordanian territory, which resulted in the loss of more than 20,000 Palestinian lives. Thanks to Egyptian intervention and other mediators, a cease-fire was arranged and subsequently the Cairo and Amman Agreements were signed, which put an end—at least for the moment—to the Jordanian-Palestinian confrontation which became known as Black September. The events of Black September resulted in Jordan's pronounced isolation in the Arab community.

In 1971, a new offensive against the Palestinians still settled in Jordan made it possible for the then Premier, Wasfi Tall, to announce the end of the Palestinian armed presence in his country. Premier Wasfi Tall was assassinated.

The situation inside Jordan and, particularly, inside its armed forces became tense. The government announced the discovery of several plots against the king. High Jordanian officers involved in the plots were sentenced to death and others to more than ten years imprisonment on charges of high treason.

Between 1971 and 1975, several purges were carried out in the armed forces because of discontent among some officers with the anti-Palestinian policy of the government.

A plan of a United Arab Kingdom was disclosed in 1972, under which the West Bank, once liberated from Israeli occupation, would be proclaimed an "autonomous Palestinian province". This plan, which reflected the old aspiration to place the Palestinians under Jordanian rule, was resolutely turned down by the PLO and by many Arab countries. The ties existing between Jordan and the United States since Hussein's assumption of power were then further strengthened and Jordan received large shipments of arms and aircraft, which, in turn, increased still more the kingdom's isolation in the Arab world.

In subsequent years, under the government of Premier Zaid Rifai, a new, gradual rapprochement occurred between Jordan and Egypt, with which relations had been broken off when the plan to form a United Arab Kingdom had been disclosed, as well as between Jordan and Syria which have many economic ties.

After having rejected in 1973 the decision of the Arab Summit Conference in Algiers to recognize the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian resistance movement, the next year, at the Arab Summit Conference in Rabat, Hussein joined the unanimous Arab opinion to proclaim officially this inalienable right of the PLO.

In 1974, with the intention—as observers believe—to "Jordanize" the kingdom, Hussein charged Premier Rifai with the formation of a government which would give lesser participation to persons of Palestinian origin, dissolved the parliament, and announced the adoption of a development plan for the period 1976 to 1980, which ignored the West Bank.

The next year, Hussein markedly improved his relations with Syria to the point where a merger of the two countries was outlined, but this project never materialized.

On July 13, 1976, Mudar Badran replaced Zaid Rifai as Premier and formed a stable government which lasted until December 1979. In that period the Premier even suggested a referendum by Palestinians and Jordanians to determine their future relations, but again, this project was never realized.

In recent years, relations between Jordan and the Palestinian resistance movement have undergone a difficult process of normalization. A meeting took place at the Jordanian air base at Mafraq in August 1979 between Yassir Arafat and King Hussein to discuss bilateral relations, and in the same year the Joint Jordanian-Palestinian Supreme Committee resumed its activites mainly to examine the problems of the Israeli-occupied territories.

King Hussein has dissociated himself from the negotiations sponsored by President Carter, which led to the signing of the Camp David agreements between Israel and Egypt. Jordan abstained from condemning the process initiated by the visit of Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem in November 1977, and did not participate in the Arab summit conferences in Tripoli and Algiers in 1977 and 1978, which condemned that process. However, on April 1, 1979, Jordan approved the resolutions of the Baghdad summit conference, which provided for sanctions against Egypt for its betrayal of the Arab cause, and became the first country to apply these sanctions.

On the other hand, Jordan's relations with Syria once again deterioriated. In 1980, the two countries found themselves on the verge of an armed confrontation motivated by their divergent positions on the conflict between Iran and Iraq, which broke out on September 22 1980. Syria also accused Jordan of providing support and training to the religiously orthodox Moslem Brotherhood which for years has shown hostility to the Baathist government in Damascus and which stepped up its terrorist activities when Syria strengthened its opposition to a partial settlement of the Middle East conflict.

As the 1980s begin, it is evident that such other initiatives with respect to the crisis in the Middle East, as shown by the European Economic Community, place great value on the position held by Jordan, such as the possibility of its abandoning its opposition to the Camp David agreements or to another, similar solution.

In December 1979, Abdel Amid Sharaf, the former head of the Royal Cabinet, replaced Mudar Badran as Premier. He died seven months later, and the premiership passed to Kassem Al Rimawi who after a short time was again succeeded in office by Mudar Badran, the king's close collaborator.

Economy: Jordan's economy was greatly affected by the war of June 1967. Having been basically agricultural in character until then, it suffered after the loss of the West Bank from a marked shortage of different products, mainly cereals, fruit and vegetables. Tourism, too, was greatly reduced after the Israeli occupation of Bethlehem and the Old City of Jerusalem.

Jordan received large subsidies from different Arab countries, including Kuwait and

Saudi Arabia, in order to reduce its balance of trade deficit.

In 1978, agriculture accounted for 9.2% of the estimated gross national product. It employs roughly one-fifth of the economically active population which is estimated at some 670,000 people. Vegetables represent 60% of the total agricultural production, fruit 26%, and cereals 14% according to the latest figures dating from 1978. Although some of these products are exported, Jordan must import food, and it is estimated that the deficit in this particular sector amounted to 80 million dinars in 1978.

Timber production grew until 1976 up to 6,855 cu.m and in 1979, a wood-working plant went into operation in Aqaba, its products destined for export.

Phosphates are the principal branch of the country's mining industry. Their proven reserves at Ruseifa, Al Hasa and Shadiya were conservatively estimated in 1978 at 809 million tons. Phosphate production amounted to 2,320,000 tons in 1978. In the preceding year, Jordan was the world's fourth largest exporter of this commodity. Plans have been drawn up to raise the production to six million tons annually by 1983. A large complex for processing phosphates is under construction near the Gulf of Aqaba at the cost of 314 million dollars.

Another major project, on the Dead Sea, is to produce potassium by natural evaporation and is expected to produce annually 1.2 million tons.

Jordan has still other mineral resources. In 1977, it produced 30,000 tons of salt, 22,100 tons of gypsum, 6,200 tons of Kaolin, and 4 million cu.m of limestone.

The manufacturing industry accounted for 11% of the gross national product in 1978. The refinery at Zarqa, which processes crude oil from Saudi Arabia, is being enlarged to reach the annual capacity of 3.7 million tons, compared with 1.4 million in 1978. The country's main cement mill at Fuheis has the annual production capacity of 1.1 million tons. Other important industrial activities include the production of iron, textiles, pharmaceutics, and consumer articles. There has been a considerable industrial growth due to the government's favourable investment policy.

Jordan is trying to increase the influx of tourists, in spite of the problems posed by the instability of the area. In 1978, its income from the tourist industry was 104.3 million dinars.

In July 1979, there were 15 commercial and 6 credit banks in operation in the country, and in the same year measures were announced designed to liberalize the foreign-exchange controls.

Jordan had in 1977 a network of 1,910 km of paved and 3,000 km of other roads. It has road connections with Syria, Iraq and Saudi Arabia. A railway line runs through the country from north to south and there are two international airports--in Amman and Aqaba. The latter city, which is Jordan's only sea port, has stepped up its activities since the re-opening of the Suez Canal in 1975.

The total value of Jordanian exports in 1978 was 90.9 million dinars, 19.5% of which was produced by exports of phosphates. The country's principal customers in that year were Saudi Arabia, Syria, different socialist countries, Kuwait, and India.

Imports, on the other hand, amounted to 458.8 million dinars in 1978, coming mostly from the Federal Republic of Germany, Saudi Arabia, Great Britain, and the United States.

In June 1979, Jordan's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 1,024 million dollars in spite of the fact that the country has a large foreign debt. Per capita income in 1978 was 762 dollars, while in the same year the gross national product amounted to 2,270 million dollars.

The national currency is the dinar the exchange rate of which in September 1980 was 0.29 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Jordan is a constitutional monarchy. The head of state is the King who appoints 30 members of the Senate for a term of four years. The National Assembly has 60 members elected by universal suffrage for a term of four years. The country is divided into eight districts whose authorities are subordinated to the central government. These districts are: Amman, Balqa, Irbid, Kerak, Maan, Jerusalem, Hebron, and Nablus. The last three are occupied by Israel.

Armed forces: The size of Jordan's armed forces is 67,810 men, 61,000 of them serving in the ground forces, 160 in the navy, and 7,000 in the air force. There are also some 10,000 paramilitary troops. In 1979, Jordan had 7000 tanks organized in two divisions.

Organizations: All political parties were banned in April 1957. The Jordanian Communist Party operates underground. There are three trade union organizations.

Education: 59% of the population are estimated to be literate. In 1978, there were 618,673 pupils attending 2,432 primary and secondary schools which had 21,514 teachers.

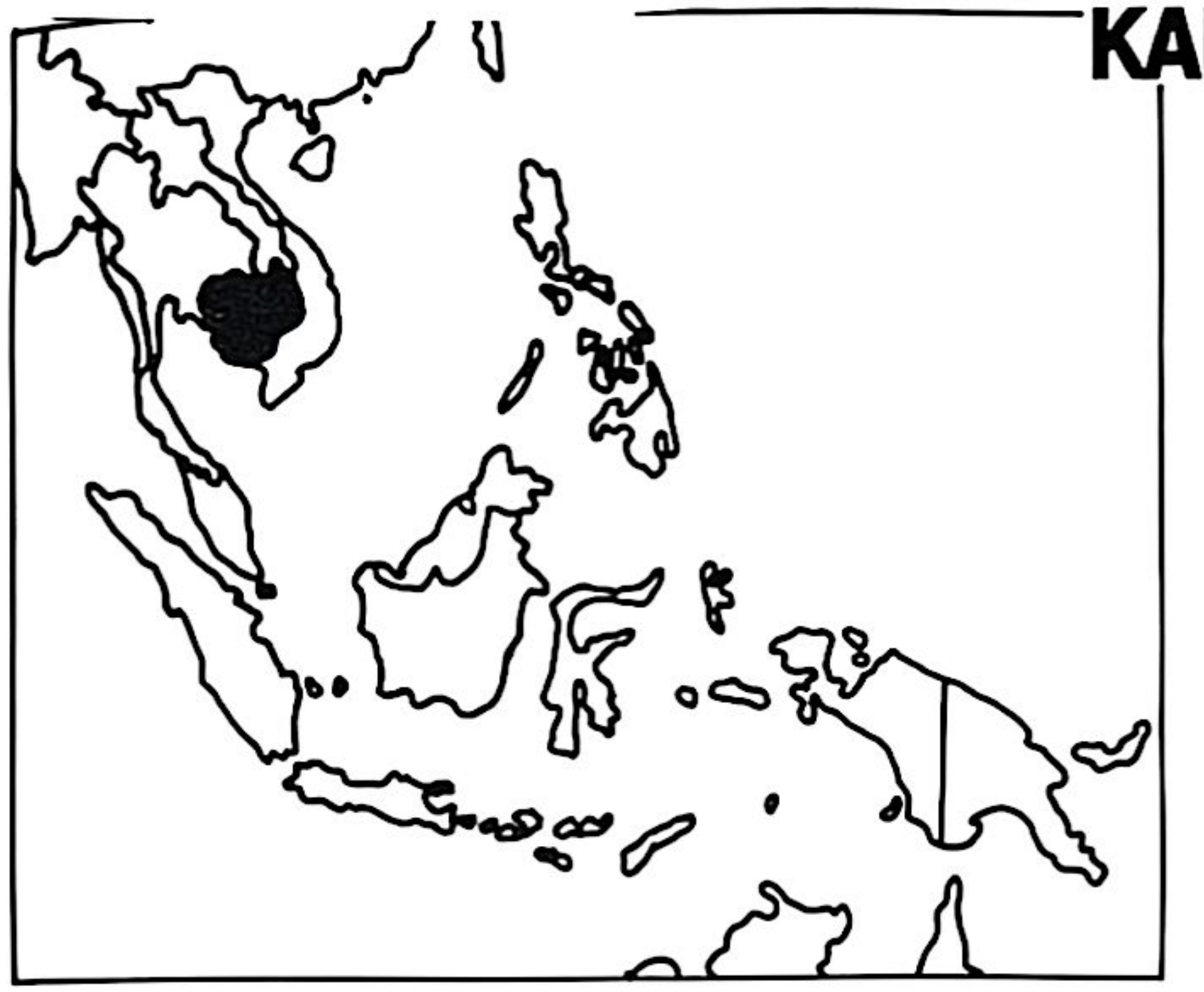
The country's main university, the University of Jordan, is located at Jubaiha near Amman. The University of Yarmouk was established in the town of Irbid in 1976. In 1978, there were 6,839 university students.

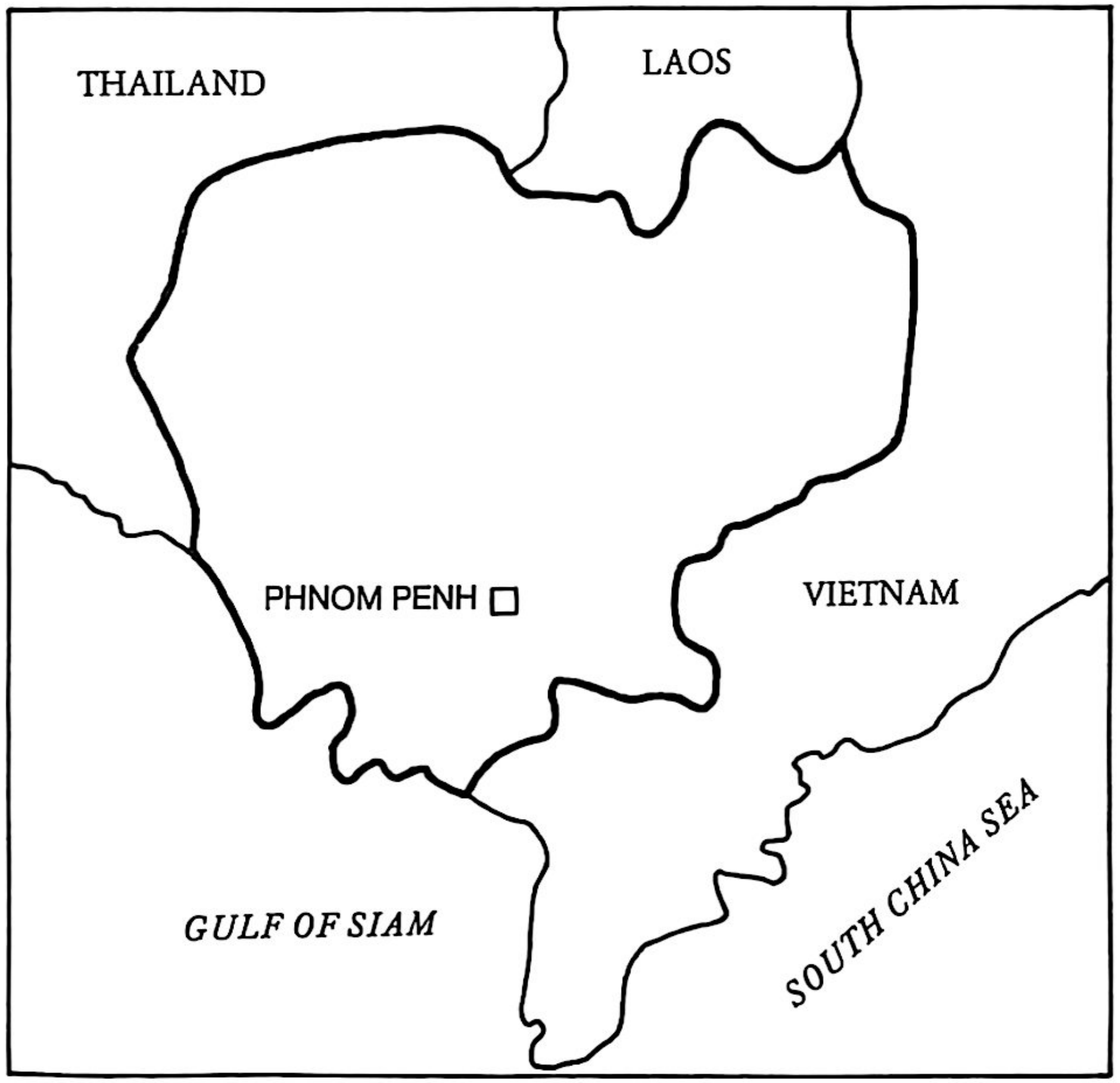
The 1977 educational budget was 22 million dinars.

Public health: In 1976, there were 38 hospitals with 3,620 beds and there was one doctor for every 2,250 inhabitants. Budgetary expenditures for public health amounted to 8,700,000 dinars in 1977.

Religion: Islam is the predominant and official religion in Jordan. 80% of the population are Sunni Moslems, the rest are Shi'a Moslems and Christians.

KAMPUCHEA




THAILAND
LAOS
PHNOM PENH
VIETNAM
GULF OF SIAM
SOUTH CHINA SEA

Official name: People's Republic of Kampuchea.
Area: 181,035 sq.km.
Borders: In the north the country borders on the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Thailand, in the west again on Thailand, and in the south and southeast on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The Gulf of Thailand or Siam forms Kampuchea's coastline in the southwest.
Population: 5,746,141 (1981) inhabitants, although during the pro-Chinese regime of Pol Pot, between 1975 and 1979, more than three million people were murdered. Before the seizure of power by the "Khmer Rouge" of Pol Pot, the annual rate of population growth was 3.1%.
Capital: Phnom Penh (350,000 in 1980).
Principal towns: Battambang and Kompong Cham.
Languages: Khmer is the official language.
Public holidays: April 17, Liberation Day (1975); January 7, overthrow of Pol Pot (1979).
Geography: Kampuchea is a part of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula in Southeast Asia. Its territory consists mostly of a vast plain crossed by many rivers, Mekong being the largest. This plain is girdled by several mountain ranges—in the north the Danguek, in the northeast the Ratanakiri range and the Chhlong Highlands, and in the south-east, the Cardamom Mountains with the country's highest peak, the Phnom Aural (1813 m). The thickly wooded mountains are sparsely populated.

The Kampuchean plain includes the basin of the Mekong with its very fertile soil and the lakes depression which covers 3,000 sq.km in the dry season, beyond which extends a zone of forests, a densely populated area of rice fields and, finally, a region of depleted soil.

The Mekong River, 500 km of whose total length of 4,083 km pass through Kampuchea from the north to the south, has its source in the snowy heights of Tibet. Along its course in Kampuchea it passes through the Tonle Sap (Great Lake). The average width of the Mekong is 1,500 m, which makes it navigable for small cargo boats from the South China Sea up to Kompong Cham. Its main tributaries are the Sekong, the Sesan and the Srepok in the northeast, and the Tonle Sap with its tributary, the Stung Sen. The rise of the Mekong waters is the country's main geographical phenomenon. From the end of May to the end of August, the average level of the river rises from two to ten metres and its flow from 1.79 cu.m per second to 33.76 cu.m.

The lakes help drain the Mekong. At the beginning of June the river begins to rise and feeds Lake Tonle Sap whose surface area, which is a natural reservoir, increases from 3,000 to 10,000 sq.km. Once that point is reached, the flow is reversed and the excess water from the lake returns to the Mekong from early October to the end of February, thereby preventing major floods. By fertilizing the surrounding farmlands, the rise of the river plays an important role in the economy and the life of the country.

Lake Tonle Sap also contains the greatest concentration of fish per cu.m in the world.

The seacoast of Kampuchea on the Gulf of Thailand has many bays and lagoons with dark, marshy soil.

The country's tropical, hot and humid climate is dominated by the monsoons which divide the year into the dry and rainy seasons. In Phnom Penh the average temperature is 27°C with only small variations between night and day.

Rainfall is distributed unevenly according to the different regions and is concentrated in the six months of the rainy season. Phnom Penh gets its annual rainfall of 1,400 mm in 120 days but in the mountains in the southwest the rainfall is much greater.
Brief history: The prehistory of Kampuchea is little known, but archeological finds document the existence of an ancient civilization of farmers and hunters.

The existing Khmer culture formed gradually in the course of the first six centuries A.D. through the merger of different racial groups in the south of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula.

Two major civilizations emerged under Indian influence. The older one, in the extreme south, was called Funan and created a kingdom which at the peak of its power covered an area including the central and lower parts of the Mekong basin, southern Kampuchea, the Menam basin, and a part of the Malay Peninsula.

The second civilization, known as Chenla, arose along the central sector of the Mekong and was the cradle of the Kamujas who gave their name to the present-day nation.

The kingdom of Chenla subjugated Funan, but both remained relatively independent for two centuries, from the 6th to the 8th century A.D. It was in that period when Khmer art and culture were formed, absorbing to a great extent elements of Indian culture. In that period, too, the capital of Angkor was founded in the north of the country, and an original and vigorous civilization developed there.

The country was finally unified at the beginning of the 9th century, and its geographical centre was located in the area of today's Siemreap province which has large tracts of fertile soil, permanent streams of water with an abundance of fish, dense woods well stocked with game, lakes, stone quarries and iron ore mines, all of which made it well suited for human settlement.

Over the centuries, the kingdom had a number of strong and able rulers, such as Jayavarman II (802-850), who founded the Khmer monarchy in 802, Suryavarman I (1000-1049), who extended his domain to the west along the Mekong, and Suryavarman II (1113-1150), who enlarged his realm all the way to the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean in the east and west of present-day Kampuchea. It was during that era, when the Angkor Vat temple and other monuments were built, which have survived to this day as documents of a brilliant civilization, after having been discovered by chance in our own era following centuries of obsurity under the mantle of nature.

Internal strife within the Khmer kingdom, together with first resistance and then attacks by the other powerful civilization of that era, the Chams, who occupied the southern part of present-day Vietnam, paved the way for the decline of the Kampuchean rulers, beginning in the 12th century, notwithstanding the efforts of king Jayavarman VII (1181-1218), who temporarily recovered some of the lost territories for his realm which included the south of Indochina and parts of Thailand and Burma.

The successors of Jayavarman VII continued to rule for another two centuries without much glory, pressed from the east by the Chams and in the west by the Thais, and forced by both to withdraw to their original dominion.

Finally, in 1431, the kings had to abandon Angkor and settle in the central part of Kampuchea, producing great social dispersion in which they lost the results of their conquest of nature, such as the extensive system of irrigation, which could only be maintained under a strong, centralized regime.

Thus a new stage began of Kampuchean history, which may be counted from the year 1440, when the Khmer kings had to move their seat to Phnom Penh. Since then no other noteworthy events had been recorded, than the struggle for the internal unity of the country, which was torn from time to time by social and religious strife, and defence against attacks from abroad, launched by rulers and peoples whom the Khmer kings had earlier dominated.

In 1853, France induced the Khmer king Ang Duong to seek her assistance which served as a pretext for extending her colonial domination of Indochina by proclaiming ten years later her protectorate over Kampuchea. Acting from a position of strength, France imposed on Kampuchea on June 17, 1884, an agreement whereby all the powers and prerogatives of the Khmer sovereign were transferred to her. France also arbitrarily delineated the frontiers of the countries of Indochina—Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea—which she divided for the purpose of a more efficient colonial domination and greater exploitation.

As the colonial power, France stopped the fighting between the neighbouring peoples, and within each of the three parts uprisings and insurrections against the French began to break out. However, they were all suppressed.

In 1930, the Communist Party of Indochina was founded under the leadership of Ho Chi Minh, which brought together the patriots who formed the vanguard of the revolutionary movement in Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea. This became the turning point in the struggle against French colonialism.

Japanese militarism replaced the French in Kampuchea in 1940 and at the end of that year installed a puppet regime. However, in April 1941, a young prince named Norodom Sihanouk succeeded his grandfather on the throne and was to play an important political role in the years to come.

France re-occupied Kampuchea on October 5, 1945, and reimposed her colonial rule in spite of an agreement granting the country autonomy. The agreement was never implemented.

The struggle for national independence received great impetus under the leadership of the Communist Party of Indochina, which decided to divide itself into three national parties for each of the three nations and to form fronts of national unity in the respective countries with certain internal coordination for the purpose of combating colonialism.

France recognized de jure the independence of Kampuchea on November 8, 1949, but imposed on that country a treaty under which she reserved for herself control over Kampuchea's military affairs, external relations, justice and the police. She also kept the country in the French Union.

In 1951, the Khmer United National Front was created and Sihanouk proclaimed a campaign of peaceful resistance against France, all of which created a situation within the country, which forced the metropolitan power to concede complete independence to Kampuchea and withdraw its troops in November 1953 when, moreover, the defeats dealt to the French by the Vientnamese patriots made it impossible for Paris to keep under its control all of Indochina.

Sihanouk held the post of Prime Minister from 1952 and was confirmed in it in February 1954. A month later he abdicated as king in favour of his father and established a new political party, the Sanghum Reastr Niyum (People's Socialist Community), which made it possible for him to win the first elections held in Septmber 1955, as well as those which took place in 1958 and 1962. Officially he pursued a neutralist policy, but under his rule great persecution of Communists was carried out, depriving them of their leadership and permitting young students returning from France and influenced by Chinese ideology, such as Pol Pot and Ieng Sary, to rise to the highest positions in the party's leadership.

After France had retired from Indochina, the United States assumed her neocolonial role, and its intervention forced Sihanouk to break off relations with Washington in May 1965. Since that period, groups of guerillas who had escaped the anti-Communist drive operated in the Kampuchean forests and began gaining strenth after March 1970, when Lon Nol, acting in collaboration with the U.S. embassy, carried out a coup in Phom Penh.

The war against the American intervention reached its peak and was fully coordinated between the National United Front of Kampuchea and the Vietnamese and Laotian patriots until the struggle was rewarded with the triumph scored jointly by the peoples of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula in April 1979.

However, since then, a strange situation began to emerge in Kampuchea, such as invasions of Vietnamese territory, a complete evacuation of the Kampuchean cities and towns, and a total absence of any information from the country and of relations with other nations.

Only China had access to Kampuchea's interior from the very beginning, following the seizure of power by the group of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary, who had risen to the top positions in the Communist Party after a campaign of intrigue and murder of those revolutionary leaders, who had not given in to the Chinese pressure.

The cities remained depopulated and the factories ceased producing, while a system of subsistence farming was installed, as well as forced labour in the rice paddies, whose only objective was to supply the crop to China.

Phnom Penh, which in prewar times had a population of half a million, swollen during the conflict with the United States and its local allies to more than a million, did not have more than 5,000 inhabitants in the first week under the Pol Pot and Ieng Sary regime.

In January 1976, the authorities proclaimed a constitution which renamed the country Democratic Kampuchea, but failed to define its system of government.

On April 7, Sihanouk, who had resided in Peking during the war, was "retired" as a head of state by his former allies with a handsome pension, and a new cabinet was installed by the National Assembly which was set up on March 20, 1976. The former head of state continued to live in Phnom Penh with his most faithful, and only on the eve of the fall of Pol Pot's group early in 1979 was moved to the Chinese capital with the intention of making use of him against the new revolutionary authorities.

On December 31, 1977, the Pol Pot and Ieng Sary government made official its territorial claims against Vietnam and gave them great publicity with a "temporary suspension" of bilateral relations.

The leaders in Phnom Penh believed that their vicious attacks along Kampuchea's frontier with Vietnam, parallelled by a campaign launched by China about alleged abuses committed against the ethnic Chinese (Hoa) living in Vietnam, would bring about a speedy capitulation by Hanoi.

Although Vietnam had publicly proposed on many occasions a settlement of the existing problems by negotiation and with respect for its territorial sovereignty, the Phnom Penh regime, prodded by Peking, launched a widespread campaign designed to foment national hatred against its neighbour, and systematically obstructed all negotiations from May 1976.

One December 31, 1977, an official Vietnamese statement underlined that Vietnam would do everything possible to safeguard the solidarity and friendship between the two peoples, but without making any concessions which would infringe on its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

By early December 1978, the opposition against the regime in Phnom Penh had become general. Some days earlier, the revolutionaries in some regions rose up in arms.

One December 3, 1978, the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea (NUFSK) was formed in the jungle of the country and elected a 13-member Central Committee, presided over by Heng Samrin. At the same time, the Front's news agency SPK began to function.

Barely twenty-four hours later, the NUFSK issued an 11-point declaration as its political platform, in which it proclaimed its resolve to fight for a democratic and non-aligned country respecting the sovereignty and friendship of all the neighbouring countries and of all the nations of the world.

With the formation of the Front, events moved at a rapid pace as the population joined its ranks on a massive scale in order to fight the regime and as Vietnam helped their struggle. On December 17, the SPK agency announced that by the 8th of that month, the revolutionary forces had put out of action more than 500 troops of the Phnom Penh regime.

In the preceding month, a large Chinese military delegation, led by the then Vice-Chairman of the Chinese Communist Party, Wang Dongxing, arrived in the Kampuchean capital with the proposal to step up Peking's assistance to Pol Pot's group and in order to determine on the spot its needs of arms and other equipment.

However, all these events notwithstanding, it was officially announced on January 5, 1979, that six provinces had been liberated and that heavy fighting was under way between the forces of the NUFSK and the regime in one third of the country.

The former put an end to the tyranny of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary two days later, when they entered Phnom Penh after three years and nine months of the worst oppression, genocide and chaos in the history of the Khmer nation.

Phnom Penh was liberated by the Khmer Revolutionary Armed Forces (KRAF) together with thousands of people from the nearby provinces, who had risen up and joined them.

Somewhat later, on January 11, the NUFSK announced the formation of the People's Republic of Kampuchea to replace the freaky structure built by the former, pro-Chinese administration.

The NUFSK drew up a programme of building a peaceful, democratic, neutral and non-aligned country progressing towards socialism very shortly after the overthrow of the Pol Pot regime. It urged the population to destroy all the vestiges of the former authorities and to help stabilize life in the country, public order and security.

One of the first moves was to dismantle the many places of torture and to disband the oppressive and administrative bodies created by Pol Pot and his group. In another move, on January 27, the press organ of the NUFSK, the journal Kampuchea, was established.

The announced programme declared that all citizens have equal political, economic and social rights and obligations, no matter what their position may have been in the previous administration. All citizens were permitted to return to their original homes, which put an end to the previous policy of concentrating the population in labour camps, where they were organized in production units, regardless of their family ties.

Thus, families could re-unite after an agony of pilgrimage in search of their surviving members, and everybody could freely return to his original place of residence for the slow process of recuperation from the psychological trauma caused to the people by the years of terror.

The same programme also announced the formation of administrative committees in all communities for the purpose of implementing its provisions and for maintaining public order of security. Their duties also included protection of public health, promotion of the people's cultural and political development, and formation of self-defence militia.

The programme provided for the just distribution of goods and ensured the provision of food, clothing and housing to all citizens. It also provided for the restoration of primary schools for children seven to ten years old and for the adoption of measures to eliminate illiteracy, which the Pol Pot regime announced in 1975 but never put into effect and subsequently prohibited its realization under the threat of death.

Individuals who had served the previous regime but had moved to the liberated areas and rejoined their families enjoyed the same rights as all other citizens, no matter whether they had taken this decision prior or after the overthrow of Pol Pot.

The programme devoted special attention to the preservation of cultural monuments, to respect for religious beliefs, historical traditions and the customs of all ethnic groups, in particular the minority ones.

After the liberation, the KRAF, together with the people and the internationalist Vietnamese military contingent, went ahead with the task of national reconstruction and with the liquidation of the remnants of the Pol Pot and Ieng Sary group. Its bands infiltrate the country from Thailand which began to show hostility to Kampuchea's new government in May 1979. It has violated Kampuchean air space and has carried out armed provocation on the frontier with material support from Peking, making use of the natural formations of the terrain, which are suitable for this type of operation.

From August 15 to 19, 1979, the government organized in Phnom Penh the trial of the Pol Pot group on charges of genocide. The trial was attended by well-known jurists from various countries. The court sentenced to death in absentia the former head of the overthrown government and his chief lieutenant Ieng Sary who had succeeded in escaping to Peking, furnished with a service passport supplied to him by the Chinese authorities.

A major task was to deal with the difficult domestic situation inherited from the previous regime which had destroyed the national economy, created a general chaos and scattered and partly exterminated the population; in coping with this task, the government had to rely on considerable aid from friendly and progressive countries and from international organizations.

In November 1979, the People's Revolutionary Council set up a special body charged with the reception and distribution to the population of the international aid supplied to Kampuchea in order to help its recovery.

The existence of small counter-revolutionary groups which cross the frontier from Thailand where they find refuge from the KRAF requires the presence in the country of a Vietnamese military contingent requested by the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea for the purpose of helping preserve the country's security.

China and Thailand which acts as the standard bearer of the reactionary elements in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations—ASEAN—head an international conspiracy—in which the United States is not involved—to prevent the People's Republic of Kampuchea from asserting its legitimate right to represent the Khmer people in international bodies and organizations.

As life continues its gradual process of normalization, this campaign to isolate the country is breaking down and Kampuchea's legitimate rights are gaining ground in the international community. Following the example of many other countries, India recognized the People's Republic of Kampuchea on July 7, 1980, and re-opened her embassy in Phnom Penh on December 31, 1980.

On September 29, 1979, the NUFSK held its 2nd congress, which ended its session on October 1, by electing a new Central Committee of 35 members and confirmed Heng Samrin in his post of General Secretary.

On November 6, 1979, the cabinet was supplemented with six additional ministers, which move furthered the process of normalization. On this road, the People's Republic of Kampuchea receives moral and material support and assistance from the socialist and progressive countries. A milestone on this road was the first conference of the foreign ministers of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, held in Phnom Penh in January 1980. A second such conference met six months later in Vientiane, and the third one took place in Ho Chi Minh City in January 1981 with the purpose of coordinating the efforts of the three neighbouring countries.

In May 1980 the World Peace Council sponsored a large international conference of solidarity with Kampuchea.

At home, the People's Republic of Kampuchea is making steady progress. On February 28, 1980, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a document re-iterating Kampuchea's readiness to receive with benevolence all those who had moved of their own will or under duress to Thailand and had become refugees.

Two months later, a delegation of Canadian priests noted that Kampuchean children had returned to schools and that many factories had re-opened their gates and had resumed production in different parts of the country.

In July 1980, the first school term after liberation successfully ended throughout the country, including the capital whose avenues are once again pulsing with life.

All these achievements add up to the drafting of a new constitution by a special commission whose chairman is the Head of State, Heng Samrin.

This progress made by the country, together with the correct policy pursued by its government, help in the liquidation of the remaining bands of the overthrown Pol Pot, in spite of the assistance they are getting in weapons, uniforms and other supplies from China and the United States through Thailand in their endeavour to destabilize the situation in Kampuchea.

This foreign involvement in the subversive operations against Kampuchea was documented in the numerous protests issued by the People's Revolutionary Council against Thai armed incursions into Kampuchean territory and by the capture on August 12, 1980, of 600 of Pol Pot's men with Chinese and American weapons and equipment, and in Thai uniforms.

The government of neighbouring Thailand is the most vociferous among the ASEAN countries in its attacks against Kampuchea.

One of the principal efforts in this direction was the proposal to convene in July 1981 an international conference to deal specifically with the so-called "problem of Kampuchea", which Phnom Penh rejected as inadmissible, just as the absurd votes in the United Nations, which allow the non-existent regime of Pol Pot to continue representing the Khmer people under the no less absurd pretext that this regime had been reconstructed and is now headed by Khieu Samphan who pretends to govern the country from Thailand.

Economy: Agriculture is pursued on 16% of Kampuchea's total area by 75% of the economically active population which is estimated at 2,900,000 people.

The Kampuchean economy is currently passing through a period of restoration following the crisis into which it had been driven by the regime overthrown in 1979.

The last available data on Kampuchean production list 1,800,000 metric tons of rice, 6,000 tons of copra, 12,000 tons of peanuts, 6,000 tons of sesame, 90,000 tons of bananas, 11,000 tons of pineapples, as well as soya beans, tobacco, maize and garden vegetables for local consumption. Rubber production amounted to 20,040 tons in 1975, which accounted for 93% of the country's total exports, and 4,270,000 cu.m of timber.

Prior to the suffering brought on the country by the Pol Pot regime, Kampuchea had 1,650,000 head of cattle, 750,000 buffaloes, and 800,000 pigs. Moreover, 85,000 tons of fish were netted from Tonle Sape Lake.

Electric power production in 1974 was 150,000,000 kWh, but the "Khmer Rouge" deprecated all industrialization and their sole objective was to retain small, light industry and subsistence farming.

The industrial sector is thus limited to a few textile and cement mills, and factories turning out plastic bags and some other products. A petroleum refinery which had been built with the capacity of 600,000 metric tons anually was left standing idle and in disrepair in the period 1975-1979.

The gross national product was estimated at 900,000,000 dollars. The pro-Chinese regime of Pol Pot abolished the national currency—the riel, which has been re-introduced

after Pol Pot's overthrow. Its last rate of exchange was 1,675 riels per U.S. dollar.

Government: The only legitimate government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea is the People's Revolutionary Council headed by Heng Samrin.

The leading political power is the People's Revolutionary Party of Kampuchea. The 4th Party's Congress was held in May 1981 (26th-29th) and was attended by 162 delegates. The Report delivered by the Presidum of the Congress was in five parts: the long and hard struggle of the Kampuchean people for independence and freedom; the struggle to defend and rebuild the country during the past two years since the overthrow of the genocidal regime; the defence of independence and national construction along socialist lines: the immediate tasks and goals of the Kampuchean revolution: the building of a genuine Marxist-Leninist Party.

The Fourth part of the Report sets out the following immediate tasks and goals of the Kampuchean revolution:

— to quickly restore production by developing the three economic sectors (State, collective and family) with the State sector playing the dominant role and focusing on agriculture in order to solve the problem of food, clothing and prevent the recurrence of famine;

— to firmly defend the homeland;

— to consolidate the revolutionary power at all levels;

— to strengthen national unity, broaden the front of national unity and consolidate the mass organizations;

— to promote international solidarity.

On May 1, 1981, elections to representative organs were held, in which about 3.5 million voters over seventeen years of age voted for the candidates of the National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea (in July renamed the Front for the Reconstruction of Kampuchea). There were 117 members of the National Assembly elected; the first regular session of the National Assembly, held at the end of June, elected the leading representatives of the legislative body, the state council and the cabinet.

By the end of 1981 more than thirty countries had recognized the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

Armed forces: The Khmer Revolutionay Armed Forces (KRAF), the armed branch of the People's revolutionary Council of the People's Republic of Kampuchea, grew in the guerilla war against the pro-Chinese regime of Pol Pot and Ieng Sary in November 1978.

Their rapid offensive, which made their ranks swell with a massive influx of the population of the liberated areas, led to the announcement on January 5, 1979, that fighting was going on in one third of the country and that six provinces had been taken over by the people.

Two days later the offensive reached its climax with the liberation of Pnom Penh, which definitely toppled the ruling clique.

The Khmer Revolutionary Armed Forces are made up of peasants, veteran soldiers of the old regime, and cadres who had dissociated themselves from the genocidal policy of the pro-Peking administration.

Organizations: The National United Front for the Salvation of Kampuchea—the NUFSK—was constituted on December 3, 1978, with the objective of fighting the Pol Pot regime and of forming the People's Republic of Kampuchea as a peaceful, neutral, democratic and non-aligned country progressing towards socialism. In 1981 this organization was renamed the Front for the National Reconstruction of Kampuchea and leads the country under the presidency of Heng Samrin. Its membership represents large sectors of the population, who accepted its eleven point programme published at the end of 1978.

Currently, the country is in the midst of a period of re-organization of all its political and social groupings which had been disbanded under the previous regime.

Education, culture and sports: The literacy campaign announced in 1975 only to be later completely abandoned during the close to three years of rule of the Pol Pot group, is now developing with the objective of completely eradicating illiteracy in the country.

In July 1980 ended the first school term in three years. The government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea immediately re-introduced education for all children six to ten years old, and institutions of secondary and higher learning are being re-activated.

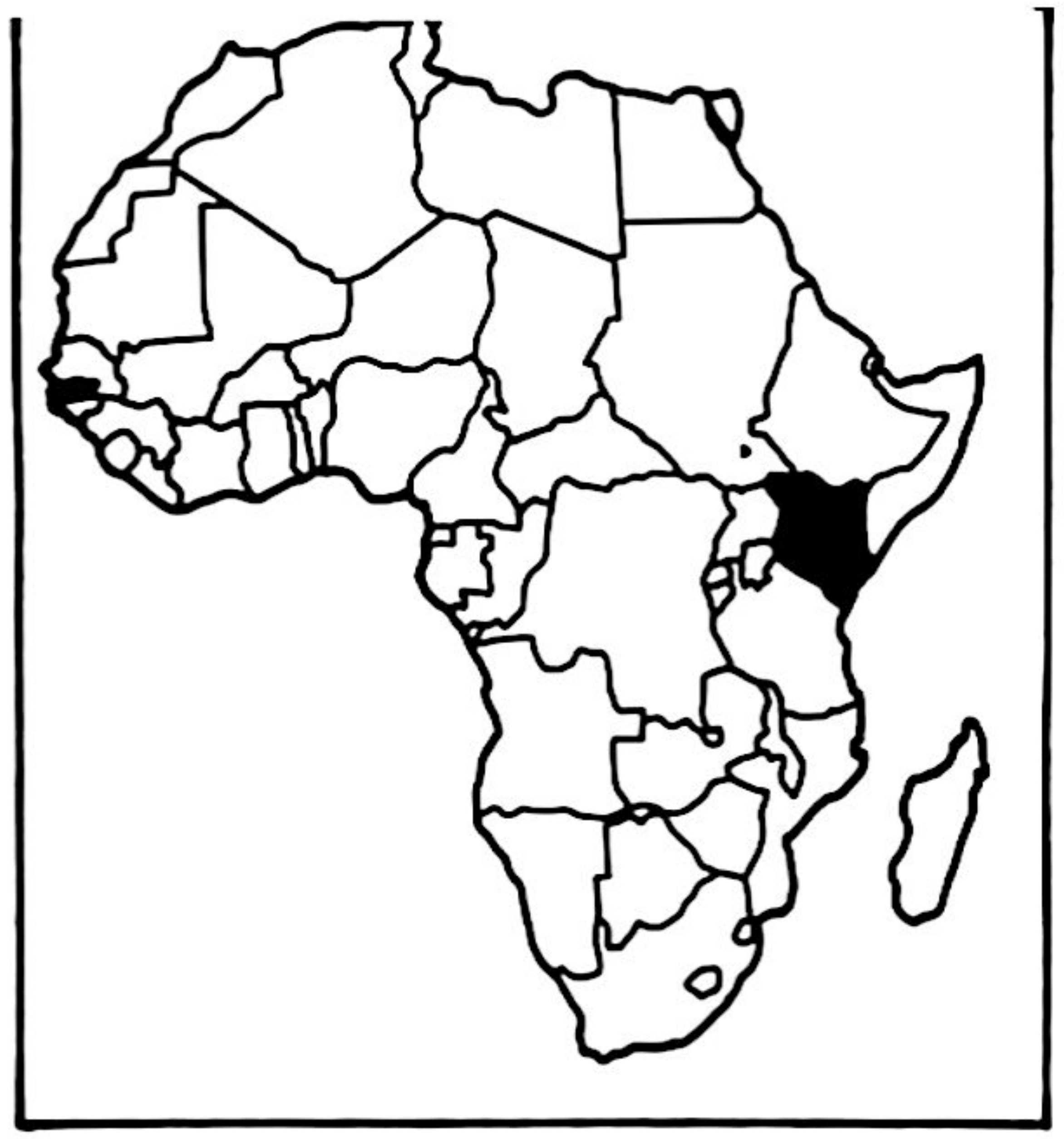
The arts and culture in general, too, are taking part in the general revival of the Khmer nation, but in the field of sports there are still many problems to be overcome before progress is made.

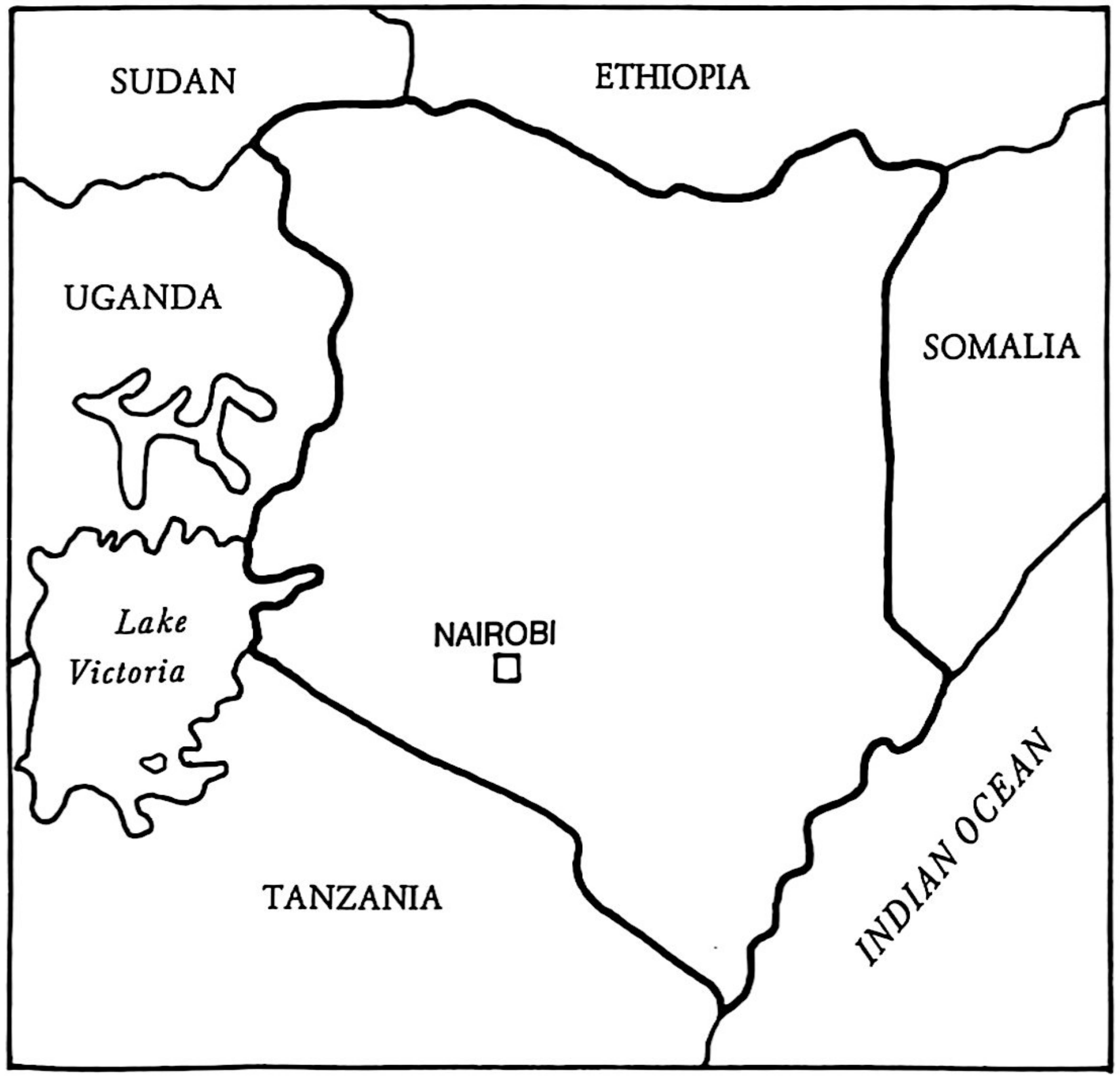
Public health: This is one objective of the current efforts directed at national revival and reconstruction, after the previous regime had completely destroyed the public health system. In that period practically all doctors were systematically killed. This persecution of physicians and auxiliary medical personnel was a part of the general policy of eradicating the intelligentsia and shifting its members to forced labour camps.

The few survivors of the slaughter ordered by Pol Pot and his group have returned to their work and Kampuchea is receiving ample cooperation and assistance from the socialist and other progressive countries as well as from international organizations.

Religion: Buddhism predominates in the country, followed by Roman Catholicism which, however, is practised only on a small scale. There are also some very small groups of Moslems.

KENYA





Official name: The Republic of Kenya.
Area: 582,644 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Kenya borders on the Sudan and Ethiopia, in the east on Somalia and the Indian Ocean, in the south on Tanzania, and in the west on Uganda and Lake Victoria.
Population: 15,000,000 inhabitants in 1980. The principal tribes are the Kikuyu, the Luo, the Luhya, the Kamba, the Meru, the Kisii, the Embu, the Kipsigi, and the Masai. The annual rate of population growth is 3.6% (1970-1976).
Capital: Nairobi (1,000,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Mombassa, Nakuru, and Kisumu.
Languages: English and Swahili. Also spoken are Kikuyu, Kamba and other languages.
Public holiday: December 12, Independence Day (1953).
Geography: Lying on the east-central coast of Africa, astride the Equator, Kenya has four principal regions. In the north it is an arid, semi-desert plain covered with thorn scrub and inhabited by a small nomad population; in the northwest are arid lowlands, Lake Rudolph and a mountainous zone; in the southeast an expanse of dry, almost uninhabited land; in the southwest a large fertile plateau of more than 3,000 sq.km, from which rise Mt. Kenya (which gave the country its name), the second highest peak of the continent with its 5,202 m, and Mt Elgon which is 4,310 m high.

Cutting through this plateau is the Great Rift Valley, a depression 38 to 64 km wide and 600-900 m lower than the plateau rising on both its sides. This is where Kenya's crop and livestock production is concentrated, as well as the majority of its population of which 85% live in the south.

The most important rivers drain into the Indian Ocean—the Tana, 840 km long, and the Sabaki, 664 km long, with Lugards Falls formed by the confluence of the rivers Athi, Asavo and Umba. The country has large expanses of bushland inhabited by lions, wolves, snakes, rhinoceros, crocodiles, monkeys and other game.

The climate is temperate on the plateau, but changes to tropical in the lowlands and in the swamps. The mean annual temperature is 25.5°C on the coast and 15°C on the plateau. The highest parts of the country get abundant rainfall which, however, almost disappears in the north and northwest. There are no great variations in temperature.

Brief history: Kenya, whose history is closely tied with that of East Africa, was inhabited at the beginning of our era by tribes of Nilotic and Nilo-Hamitic origin, which fought off for a long time Bantu expansion. The period from the 4th to the 10th centuries is considered to have been the most crucial, and the Bantu tribes occupied at least the coastal zone of present-day Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and northern Mozambique.

It seems that the "dark age" of the history of East Africa coincides with the era in which the Bantu peoples expanded all the way to the coast of Tanganyika and Kenya, aided perhaps by the introduction of certain products from Southeast Asia and Arab sailors who were already establishing overseas trade with black slaves.

In view of this global aspect of trade in the Indian Ocean, ~~the question of~~ Arab settlement in East Africa assumes different proportions. As shown by the traditions prserved in Arabia and East Africa, the first colonizers, who came in the 8th century, were Shi'ite Moslems from Oman on the Arabian Gulf, while it is assumed that the port of Kilwa in Kenya was founded by the other Moslem sect, the Sunnis.

In 1444, the Portuguese made their first penetration of the coast which they had already explored in their search for gold and spices, and began to expand their slave trade. Four years later Vasco de Gama commanded an expedition which landed on the east coast and launched a campaign of conquest driving the Arabs out of Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania.

In 1790, the Arabs reconquered some of these territories, but European interests, in particular the English and the French, began to intervene in this region.

England, which had abolished the slave trade in 1807, began to patrol the coast to stop slave traffic and at the same time to establish contacts with the Arab chieftains in order to block French influence in this region. She began her penetration when she obtained permission for this purpose from Imam Seyyid Said (1822); nevertheless, it was the German missionaries Johann Kraft and Johannes Rebmann, who were the first Europeans to explore—in 1849—the interior of the country.

From the 1840s to the 1870s, there was a steady growth of the number of explorers who under the cloak of archaeological expeditions tried to find the sources of the Nile and other rivers, and study the vegetation and wildlife of the bush and forests.

After having explored Lake Victoria, the English increased their interest in the Kenya-Uganda area, particularly in the period known as the "partition of Africa" (1880-1900).

Fighting with Britain for the riches of East Africa were France, Portugal and Germany.

At the Berlin Conference of 1884 and 1885, Britain, France, Germany and Belgium discussed their claims and divided Africa among themselves. Germany and Britain clashed over the partition of East Africa. Two years later they agreed that all the territory north of Lake Victoria would be British, while the territory south of the lake would become German domain. This gave the British control over Uganda.

The East Africa Association obtained in 1887 a concession from the Sultan of Zanzibar, giving it control over a 16 km wide coastal strip. In the early 1890s the British Imperial East Africa Company was formed, but failed due to financial problems and turned over its interests to the government.

On July 1, 1895, Britain proclaimed the so-called British Protectorate of East Africa (Kenya-Uganda) notwithstanding the resistance put up by the Kamba, Kikuyu and Masai tribes.

In 1896, construction began of a railway linking the Kenyan port of Mombassa with Uganda, but work on this project had to be temporarily suspended because of the natives' resistance and the high mortality rate caused by the inhuman exploitation of the workers. More than 30,000 Indians and other Asians were brought in to work on the railway which in 1901 reached Lake Victoria from Mombassa, and in subsequent years was extended all the way to Uguanda.

Because of the tribal uprisings, colonization of the area could not be completed until the end of World War I. In order to facilitate their domination, the natives were kept in "reserves" and were dispossessed of their lands. With the help of military posts established throughout the territory, the English colonists succeeded in seizing more than 140,000 sq. km of land.

Simultaneously Britain began to sell the usurped land to colonists who moved to Kenya from their home country in considerable numbers, and in 1905 decreed the formation of a Legislative Council (for Europeans only) which would represent the new immigrants (3,000 in 1914). In the 1920s, one Indian was admitted to the Council, while African participation was maintained through a European missionary.

In the 1920s, the Association of Kikuyu Youth was established and organized the first moves against British colonial rule.

In 1924, the Association adopted the name Kikuyu Central Association with Harry Thuku as its first leader, who was later succeeded by Jomo Kenyatta. The Association, which admitted only members of the Kikuyu tribe to its ranks, began to fight against the massive expropriation of tribal land and against European missionary influence.

Kenyatta went to London in 1930 to represent the Association, which was outlawed, and stayed in England until 1946. There he took part in the Pan-African Congress, held in Manchester in 1945, where the independence of Kenya was first mentioned.

In the meantime, in Kenya the African forces stepped up their struggle against measures taken by the colonial authorities, which greatly reduced the income of the native population and raised the already high taxes. The colonial authorities answered the African demands by permitting a native to become a member of the Kenya Legislative Council.

Thousands of Kenyans were recruited into the British armed forces fighting the Nazis in North Africa, the Italians in Ethiopia and Somalia, and Japanese imperialism in Burma. When these soldiers returned to Kenya after World War II, colonial rule there had been weakened by the exodus of some colonists and the attrition caused by the world-wide conflict. Calls for independence increased and the administration of the country by the Legislative Council in which five million Africans had only one nominal representaive, was being rejected.

The Kenya African Union (KAU) was founded in 1943, and at the beginning of 1947 Jomo Kenyatta, who had shortly before returned from England, became its president.

In 1952, the Mau-Mau rebellion broke out in the Kenya highlands inhabited mostly by the Kikuyu tribe; the objective of the uprising was the restitution of Kikuyu lands seized by the colonial authorities, and cessation of the maltreatment of the native population. The British turned down the demands, invoked a state of emergency (which was to last seven years), banned all political parties and arrested their leaders, including Kenyatta and five members of the Kikuyu Central Association.

Jomo Kenyatta was detained in 1953 and sentenced to prison on charges of complicity with the Mau-Mau movement. The repression grew, claiming 15,000 Africans killed and more than 80,000 sent to concentration camps.

The Mau-Mau peasant insurrection, as this movement was known throughout the world, was being slandered and distorted by all the Western propaganda media which accused the insurgents of violations of the most fundamental principles of humanity.

In the meantime, the KAU expanded its ranks by admitting members of other major Kenyan tribes, such as the Luo, whose leader was Odinga Oginga, a leftist politician, the Kamba and the Kalenjin. Thus the Kenya African National Union (KANU) was formed, replacing the KAU.

In spite of the brutal repression pursued by the British troops which in growing numbers occupied Kenyan territory, the resistance increased and the colonial authorities had to give in. In 1960, the state of emergency was lifted and the colonial power promised a constitution and elections to form a Legislative Assembly.

In these elections the Kenya African National Union (KANU) won nineteen seats in the Legislative Council, and Kenyatta was appointed Prime Minister under popular pressure and in spite of the fact that he had been unable to vote himself, because he had been under house arrest since April 19, 1960. Coming second in the elections was the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU), which was organized by the colonialists and whose president was Ronald Ngala. KADU won eleven seats in the Legislative Council. KADU advocated the formation of a federal system of government in contrast to KANU which called for centralized power.

As a result of negotiations held in Nairobi, Kenya was given internal autonomy on February 14, 1962, which entered into effect in June of the following year. However, at the London Conference of October 1963, independence was set for December 12th of the same year.

Kenyatta prevailed over the delaying tactics used by the British government and over Ngala's threats to form an independent state made up of four provinces, by winning a crushing victory in the general elections of 1963.

In those elections, KANU won 83 seats in the lower house of the Legislative Assembly and 23 of the 38 seats in the Senate.

On December 12, 1963, Great Britain recognized the independence of Kenya within the Commonwealth.

A few days after the proclamation of independence, soldiers of the Kenya Rifles regiment mutinied against their British officers, and Kenyatta sought military assistance from Britain which had already withdrawn most of her troops from the country. On December 12th, 1964, the Republic of Kenya was proclaimed and a one-party system was instituted.

Kenyatta assumed the presidency and headed the government in which also participated the nationalist leader Odinga Oginga and other leaders of the left wing of the party which was made up mostly of the Kikuyu and Luo communities, the two major ethnic groups in the country.

At the beginning of 1966 Odinga Oginga was forced to resign as Vice-President, since he demanded the liquidation of British economic interests in the country's basic sectors. On March 14th, Oginga formed a new political party, the Kenya Popular Union (KPU).

In January 1967, the Senate and the House of Representatives merged into a single body, the National Asssembly, from whose members the President appointed cabinet ministers and other government officials.

The government of Kenya, which had re-asserted its policy of non-alignment and its decision to fight against colonialism and racism, failed in 1968 to implement the decisions agreed upon by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) against Rhodesia, nor did it break off relations with Great Britain.

In 1969, Tom Mboya, cabinet minister and heir apparent of Kenyatta, was killed. The assassination was used as a pretext for disbanding the KPU and for arresting its leader Odinga Oginga.

Odinga Oginga was released in 1971. Three years later he joined KANU but was prohibited from entering the next elections as a candidate.

One year later the situation deteriorated when in March 1971 a student revolt against the government broke out. The crisis reached its peak when the parliamentary leader Mwangi Kariunki was assassinated; this act caused a split within the party.

One faction directly accused the government of having itself organized Kariunki's assassination, and serious incidents erupted in the capital.

The conflicts within KANU grew, and some groups accused the President himself of trying to govern without the parliament. Two members of parliament were arrested while that body was in session, and the student revolt was crushed.

Opposition forces criticized what they called the "Kenyatta dynasty", which, they said, was formed by the President's family and which constituted the most powerful private economic group in East Africa. This group owns vast plantations and controls trade in precious stones, casinos, and different industries.

In 1977, Oginga re-appeared on Kenya's political stage, when he ran as a candidate in elections of representatives for KANU. The elections were indefinitely suspended in a move which frustrated the attempts of the Luo community to obtain greater representation in that political organization.

Beginning in 1977, Kenya tried to improve its relations with the neighbouring states, following the disintegration of the East African Community.

In 1978, Kenya was in favour of Ethiopia's fight against the Somali expansion in the Ogaden. Somalia is also laying claim to one of Kenya's northwestern provinces.

In August 1978, Kenya's Chief Prosecutor, Charles Njonjo, was severely criticized for his public statements on South Africa, in which he advocated the opening of a dialogue with Pretoria "with the objective of forming a bridge to reduce the enormous differences separating us," as he said.

On August 22, 1978, President Jomo Kenyatta, Kenya's head of state ever since the formation of the independent republic, died in Mombassa. He was succeeded by Vice-President Daniel Arap Moi.

In October 1978, elections were held, the first in 12 years, to designate a Vice-President and other leading officials of KANU. Mwai Kibaki was elected Vice-President of the sole political party in the country. Kibaki, who retained his government post, had served as Minister of Finance and Planning for nine years.

An anti-government plot was discovered in November 1978, in which leading members of the Kenyan government were to be assassinated, including President Arap Moi.

In parliamentary elections held on November 8, 1979, 60% of the members of parliament were replaced, including one third of the cabinet members. According to the foreign press, the outcome of the elections was a direct result of the electorate's rejection of the make-up of the previous government. One of those who suffered electoral defeat and failed to be re-elected to parliament was Omolo Okero, the president of KANU.

Odinga Oginga, the leader of the proscribed Kenya Popular Union (KPU) had been set free before the elections but his political group was not permitted to run in them. This prohibition produced many disturbances, especially among university students, and the university was closed during this time.

When the new government was appointed after the elections, President Arap Moi appointed to the different government posts representatives of the country's ethnic and regional groups in keeping with a Kenyan tradition. The appointees included Odinga Oginga, who was named chairman of the Cotton Board. On that occasion President Arap Moi declared that in Kenya there was no place for tribalism and that any person found guilty of practising tribalism would be severely punished.

In October 1980, Kenya's parliament unanimously decided to put into effect measures for disbanding all tribal organizations in the country.

After Jomo Kenyatta's death, the new President did not remain blind to the danger inherent in the authoritarian practices and measures restricting political rights, which had been pursued by his predecessor, and ordered the inclusion in his government's platform of the fight against poverty and elimination of the great social differences prevalent in the country.

In November 1980, armed Somali groups made incursions in the northeastern part of Kenya, a move which forced the imposition of a curfew in the northern Kenyan province bordering on Somalia, which raises claims to large tracts of territory in Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia, asserting historical rights to these territories.

These attacks by armed Somali groups belonging to the armed forces of Somalia resulted in a large number of people killed and wounded among the population of Kenya's frontier area.

The press in Nairobi condemned the subversive activities carried out by neighbouring Somalia which wants to annex areas belonging to its three neighbours in its aspirations to create "Great Somalia". The press reports also disclosed that a group of American military advisers had been detected in villages close to the areas of conflict, who "it seems play some role in the training of the Somali agents" attacking Kenyan villages near the frontier between the two countries.

In January 1981, Kenya and Ethiopia decided to make joint efforts aimed at preserving peace along their common frontier and at stopping Somali infiltration of their territories.

At the end of the same month, Kenya's Minister of National Security, G. Kariuki, accused the Somali government of infiltrating into Kenya terrorist agents who committed sabotage in a luxury hotel in Nairobi and caused death and injury to more than a hundred people, as well as material loss of three million dollars. He charged the Somali authorities with the attempt to destroy by such actions tourism in Kenya and to destabilize the country.

Economy: Agriculture is pursued on 1,670,000 hectares of the total area of 56,925,000 hectares by some 80% of the economically active population which in 1976 was estimated at 5,135,000 people and which produces according to FAO data barley, maize, millet, oats, wheat, bananas, pineapples, coffee, tea, cotton fibre, sesame, sugar cane, legumes, and potatoes. In livestock production there are 7,350,000 head of cattle, which in 1977 yielded 128,000 tons of meat, 70,000 pigs, 3,200,000 sheep, 3,600,000 goats and 14,300,000 poultry. The mining industry exported in 1975 among other items 5,553 tons of sodium carbonate and 49,163 tons of fluorspar. The annual fish catch—both of sea and fresh-water fish—yields 28,600 tons.

Industry, which is light, produced among other items 134,000 tons of wheat flour, 982,000 tons of cement, and 1,044,000 kWh of electricity in 1976.

The national merchant marine had 19 vessels in 1974 with the total displacement of 17,331 registered tons. According to available data, Kenya's gross national product in 1976 was 3,278,461,355 dollars, when the balance of trade closed with a deficit of 339,027,596 dollars (imports of 972,763,111 dollars and exports of 633,735,515 dollars). At the end of 1977, Kenya's foreign exchange reserves amounted to 523,300,000 dollars, while its foreign debt in 1975 was 520,400,000 dollars. By the end of 1977, the cost of living index was 78 points higher than in 1972. The national currency is the chelin and its rate of exchange in January 1979 was 7.47 per U.S. dollar.

When he assumed the presidency, Daniel Arap Moi had to cancel 40% of the industrial projects whose construction was envisaged in the five-year period beginning in 1980, partially because of the inflation affecting the world market.

The solution of Kenya's economic problems appears to be especially difficult and complex in a country which follows the capitalist model of economic development, and although the government of Daniel Arap Moi is pursuing a policy of "Africanization" and is progressively raising the participation of the state in economic development, private capital prevails in all the vital industrial sectors.

According to statistical data, in Kenya private investments control 99% of agricultural production, 82% of manufacturing industry, and 58% of the building industry. Foreign capital, especially British, controls 50% of agricultural exports (coffee, tea, sisal, cotton) and dominates the few major industrial enterprises, the banks and foreign trade.

Although 85% of the population work in agriculture, half of them only produce what they need to susbsist, leaving aside the fact that there are roughly one million individuals who do not own any land.

In trying to combat unemployment (Kenya's population grows at the annual rate of 3.6% and there is a constant migration of the rural population to the already overpopulated urban areas), the government must cope with the effects of the inflation caused by the economic and financial machinations of the leading Western powers. An aggravating factor in this respect are the costs of importing petroleum, which in 1970 took 30% of Kenya's total import income. Kenya covers 80% of its energy needs from petroleum whose costs in 1980 amounted to 400 million dollars.

Government: The Republic of Kenya has a unicameral parliament and a one-party system. The members of parliament—there are 158 of them—are elected in general elections controlled by KANU for a term of five years. In addition, 12 members of parliament are appointed and two serve ex officio.

The President, elected by popular vote for a term of five years, holds executive power and must be—as all cabinet members—also a member of parliament. The Vice-President is appointed by the President and under the constitution succeeds him if the latter dies.

There are seven provinces which have their regional assemblies, but the powers of these bodies have been reduced to purely administrative functions. The structure of local government was inherited from the period of the British protectorate.

Armed forces: After the proclamation of the Republic the government launched a programme of reinforcement and re-equipment of the army from 3,000 to 5,000 men. It inherited many of its officers from the three battalions of the already mentioned Kenya Rifles regiment, together with weapons and British advisers (these battalions were the only military units not withdrawn from the country after independence in 1964).

An air force and a navy were created, while the paramilitary police, called the General Service Unit, was strengthened.

In June 1972, the President abolished the post of Chief of Staff and created a collective command of the armed forces under his orders and those of the Ministry of Defence, which is under his control.

According to 1978 data, the Kenyan armed forces consist of an estimated 800 air force personnel, 6,500 men in the army, 400 men in the navy, and 1,800 men in paramilitary units.

On June 17, 1976, the United States and Kenya signed a military agreement under which 12 U.S. F-5 combat planes were to be supplied to Kenya. On various occasions in the course of 1980, the two governments discussed the possibility of building American military facilities in Mombassa.

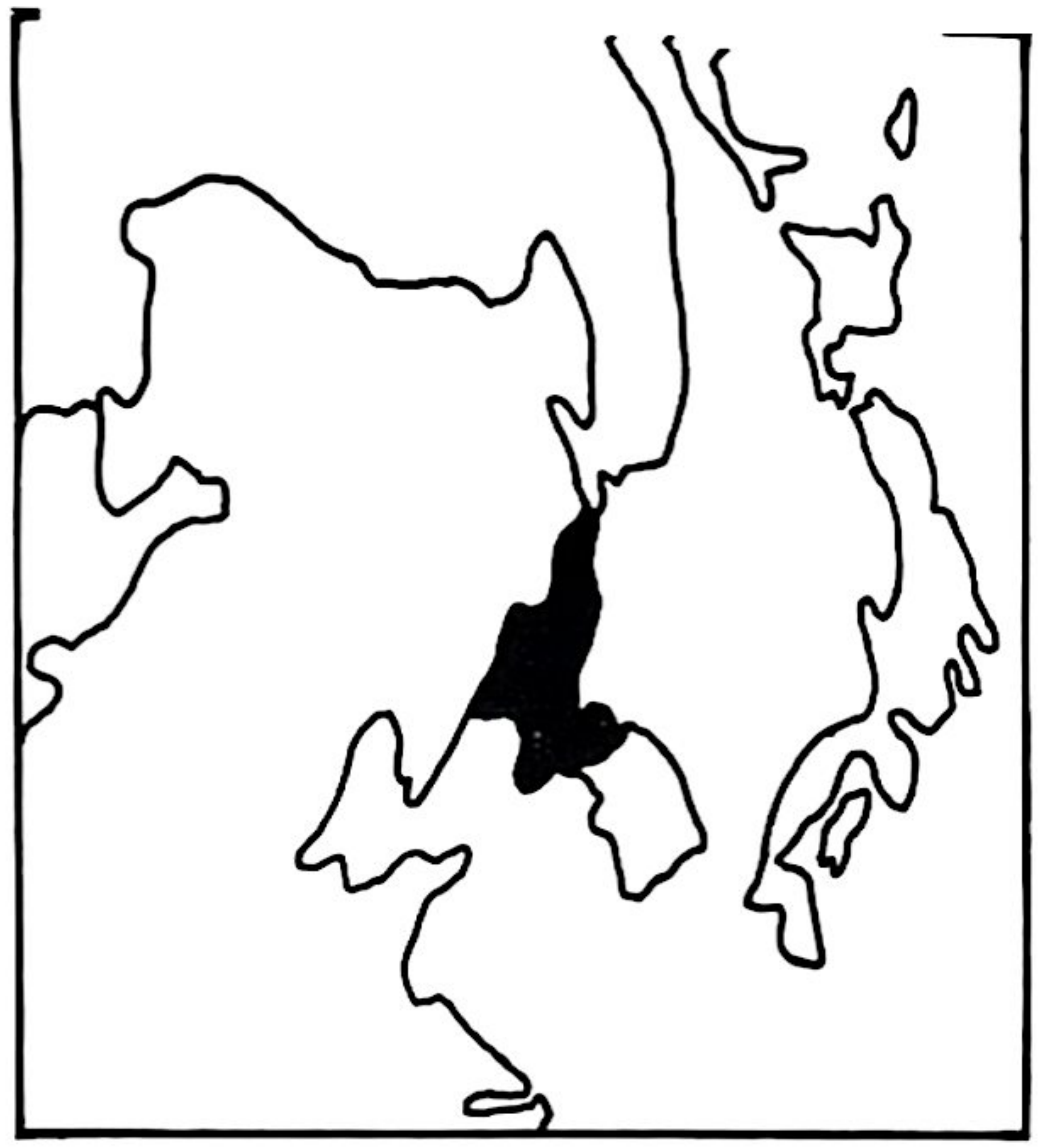
Political parties: Since December 1964, there has been one political party in Kenya—the Kenya African National Union (KANU).

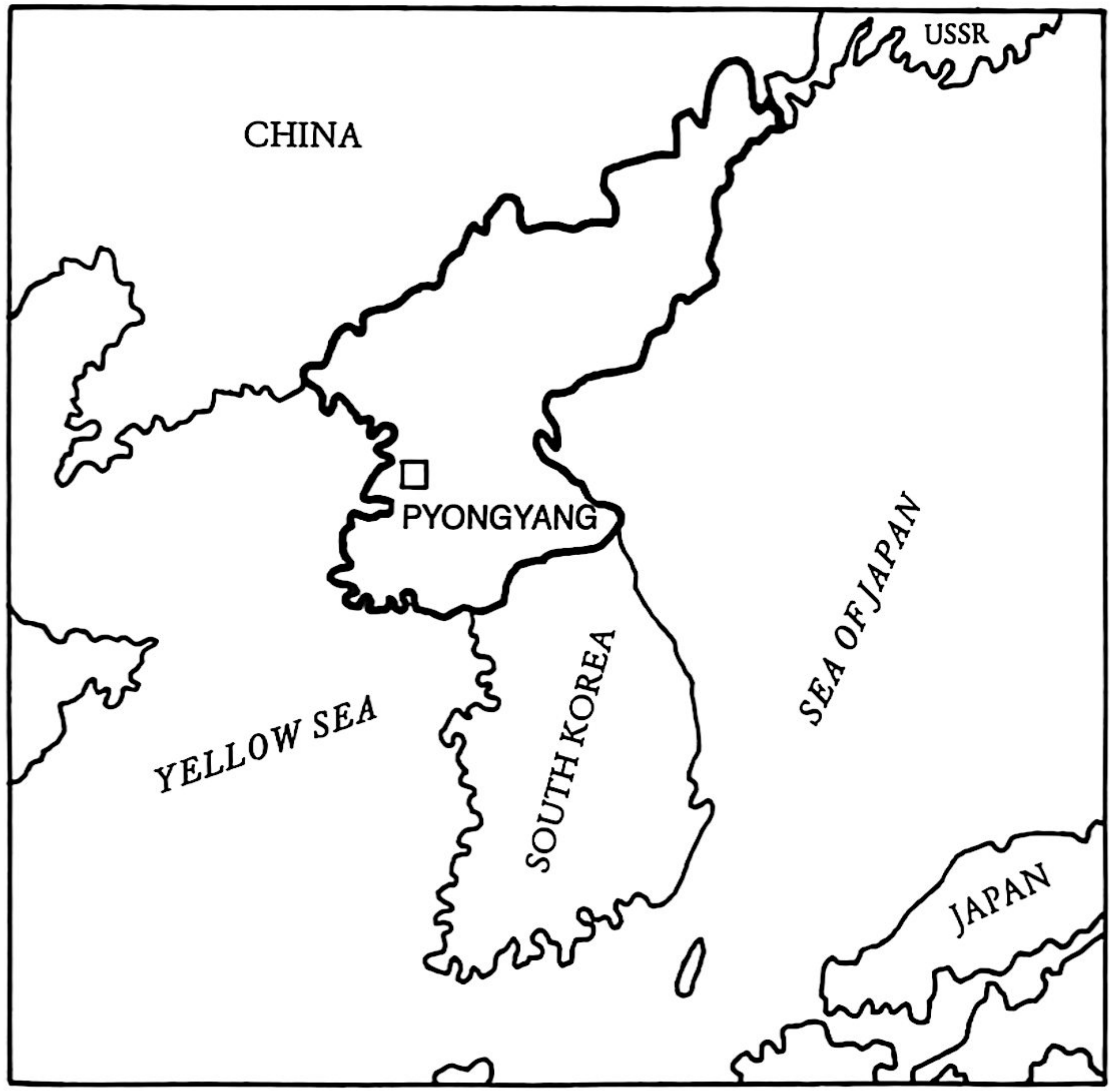
Education: In 1976, enrollment in primary schools was 2,787,909 pupils who were instructed by 50,713 teachers. 987 secondary schools with a teaching staff of 5,192 were attended by 195,779 students. In addition, there were 18 vocational training centres with a student body of 3,836 and 245 teachers. Higher education was provided to 5,000 students by a teaching staff of 600. Illiteracy among the adult population is 75%.

Public health: In 1974, Kenya had 2,076 doctors and 49 dental surgeons concentrated in the principal urban centres. The central hospital in Nairobi has 400 beds. In the rest of the country there are some 10,000 hospital beds. The number of nurses in 1974 was 1,598.

Religion: Therc is no official religion. 38% of the population practice animist cults, 37% are Protestants, 22 % are Roman Catholics, and 3% are Moslems.

KOREA





Official name: The People's Democratic Republic of Korea.
Area: 121,193 sq.km.
Borders: In the north, its frontiers with the Soviet Union and China are formed by the Duman (Tyumen) and Amnok (Yalu) Rivers, and it occupies 54.8% of the Korean Peninsula between the Sea of Japan in the east and the Yellow Sea in the west.
Population: 17,072,000 in 1978. The annual rate of population growth is 2.7%.
Capital: Pyongyang.
Principal cities: Kaesong, Wonsan, Pyongsong, Siniju, Kangze, and others.
Official language: Korean.
Public holidays: September 9, Foundation of the Republic (1948).
Geography: The Korean Peninsula with its 221,601 sq.km extends from the north to the south in the northeastern part of Asia between 43° and 33° latitude, and 124° and 131° longitude east.

It has 8,700 km of coastline and its northern frontier extends for 1,300 km. The 38th parallel has divided the peninsula politically ever since the end of World War II, due to the imperialist policy of the United States.

Some 75% of the territory is mountainous and the remaining 25% is lowlands. Two thirds of the highlands are approximately 482 m high on average. The highest points are Bektusan (2,744 m), Kuanmobong (2,541 m), Zanra (1,950 m), Ziri (1,915 m), Kumgansan (1,638 m), and Myohyangsan (1,099 m).

The lowlands with rich soil lie in the east, including those of Jonam, Pyongyang, Zeryong, and Riongnam, each roughly 500 sq.km in size.

The principal rivers, which are partly navigable, are the Amnok (790 km), the Naktong (525 km), the Dumang (520 km), the Zang (514 km), and the Dedong (430 km). The last of them passes through Pyongyang.

The most important lakes are the Kuangpo and the Chongzi in the Bektusan Mts. where the Amnok and the Dumang rivers have their sources.

There are 3,300 islands with a total area of 5,932 sq.km.

Korea's climate is relatively moderate and follows four clearly defined seasons because of northerly winds. The mean annual temperature varies between 4° and 14°C.

There is only slight rainfall in the spring, but in June, July and August there are heavy rains accounting for 50 to 60% of the entire annual rainfall of 1,400 mm.

Brief history: The Korean Peninsula was inhabited already in the Paleolithic era. The first class state, the Gozoson, emerged some time in the 4th and 5th centuries B.C. in the Liao Basin. It was succeeded by the Bouio and Zinguk states, both slave societies. Between the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D., the feudal states of Bakse and Silla were formed in the south, and the Kogurio state in the north.

These three feudal states reached a high level of cultural development and waged constant wars between each other, but these ended in 668, when they were all united under Silla rule. In the second half of the 9th century, a new division of the peninsula took place between the states of Silla, Tebong and Jubekje.

At the end of the 10th century, following a large-scale peasant rebellion against the feudal lords, the Koryo dynasty re-unified the country and ruled from 918 to 1390 without changing, however, the predominant system of production.

Under the Koryo dynasty, the country underwent great economic and cultural progress due to the development of handicrafts, especially the production of porcelain, gold, silver and bronze articles. Similar achievements were scored in science, technology, astronomy, meteorology, and ship-building.

Korea's cultural and commercial relations with the outside world extended as far as the Middle East.

Expropriation of land, growing exploitation of the peasantry by large landlords, and the general anxiety about unceasing Japanese aggression brought about the fall of the Koryo dynasty and its replacement by the Ri dynasty supported by the bureaucracy and owners of medium-sized landed estates.

The new rulers named the country Chosun, established their capital in Seoul, and drove out the Japanese in 1599, following three years of occupation. They also consolidated the central feudal power, reorganized the agrarian system, promoted new methods of rice-growing, supported the growth of the textile industry and of handicraft production, and spurred cultural development.

The class contradictions in Korea's feudal society intensified in the second half of the 17th century with the development of mercantile and monetary relations. At the beginning of the 19th century, peasant rebellions broke out, such as that in Pyongyang province in 1811. These peasant uprisings shook the foundations of the feudal regime and became the germs of the popular struggle against subsequent aggressions by the United States and other capitalist powers of Europe.

In 1860, the local population sank the American warship "General Sherman" which had sailed up the Dedong River all the way to Pyongyang. Eleven years later, a U.S. naval fleet occupied the island of Kangjuado, which, however, it later had to abandon. Almost simultaneously, France sent a fleet to Korea, but it was also forced to withdraw in the face of Korean resistance.

In 1876, under Japanese pressure, the Korean rulers had to sign an unequal treaty which opened the doors to Japanese merchants. Somewhat later, similar agreements were imposed on Korea by the United States, Great Britain and other European powers.

Progressive intellectuals launched a bourgeois revolution with a coup d'etat in December 1884, which failed for lack of preparation and because of foreign intervention. However, some reforms were achieved in that period, especially in the wake of the Kabo Peasant War in 1894.

With the support of other imperialist powers, the Japanese stepped up their aggression against Korea, converting it into a protectorate and then annexing it in 1910.

The October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917 inspired the Korean people, who rose against the Japanese domination on March 1, 1919, but were defeated by the numerical superiority of the enemy and because they had no revolutionary party capable of leading them.

Nevertheless, Marxist-Leninist ideas spread among the workers and in April 1925, the Korean Communist Party was formed. It was this party which led the great insurrections of Korean workers and peasants in 1931 and 1932.

Korea suffered for almost 40 years under brutal Japanese oppression and colonial exploitation. The Japanese plundered the country's natural and human resources to feed their war machine.

Tokyo banned the use of the Korean language, the traditional Korean dress and other national customs, but the struggle aganst the occupation did not cease. During World War II, the Communist Party, headed by the guerrila commander Kim Il Sung, organized and led a successful armed insurrection against the Japanese positions all along Korea's frontier with Manchuria, and—already converted into the Korean People's Revolutionary Army—they defeated together with Soviet troops the Japanese colonial forces on August 15, 1945.

After the victory, People's Commitees were organized throughout Korea under the guidance of the Communist Party and other patriotic forces associated in the Front for the Restoration of the Fatherland.

At that point, on September 8, 1945, United States troops landed in and occupied the southern part of the Korean Peninsula. Under the terms of the Potsdam Agreements, signed in July of that year, Soviet troops were stationed north of the 38th parallel after having entered Korea together with the Americans in order to defeat the Japanese and drive them back to their own country.

The Potsdam Agreements clearly stipulated the provisional character of the military occupation and division of the country into two zones, as well as the independence and democratic nature of Korea.

In December 1945, the United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union held a conference in Moscow to determine the political future of Korea. The Soviet Union pressed for an early withdrawal of the occupation troops, but had to accept the formation of a Joint Trust Commission for the maximum period of five years, which would seek ways and means of maintaining Korea's national unity and of holding general elections which would guarantee the unity, democracy and independence of the country.

The implementation of the agreements failed from the very beginning, when the United States insisted on the participation in the government of the most reactionary and most anti-democratic forces grouped around Synghman Rhee who had shortly before returned to Seoul from Washington, where he had lived for long years.

In view of the unity and growth of the revolutionary forces in both the north and the south of the country, the United States decided to break the Moscow Agreements, and raised the Korean problem in the United Nations in September 1947, counting on its "mechanical" majority in that organization, which made it possible for Washington to have adopted any resolution it wanted. Thus it succeeded in having a Provisional U.N. Commission for Korea set up for the purpose of supervising the elections in both parts of the peninsula.

In the elections, the United States installed Synghman Rhee and officially formalized the country's division by creating a state which was given the name of the Republic of Korea. Despite protests by the Korean people and the Soviet Union, the unilateral elections in the south on May 10, 1948, were preceded by arrests, repression and execution of advocates of re-unification.

In response to these developments, the organizations which had taken part in the Re-Unification Conference held in Pyongyang in 1946, met at Heju in June 1948 and decided to hold general elections throughout the country on August 25.

In spite of repression in the south, 77.52% of the population voted and elected 360 deputies, while in the north, 99.97% of the electorate voted and elected 212 deputies.

On September 8, 1948, the southern deputies arrived in Pyongyang and together with the northerners took part in the first session of the Supreme People's Assembly. At that session, Kim Il Sung was elected Prime Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, which was unanimously established the next day.

Since then, the Korean people, divided by imperialism, have undergone a process which is placing the two parts of Korea against each other because of their different social systems. Under United States occupation, the south was turned into a colony and base for aggression.

It was there where the 1950 aggression against the North was hatched, and to this day South Korea continues to be a focal point of tension and danger for Asia and the whole world, while its population is being denied the most elementary human rights.

In the meantime, a democratic, anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolution progressed in the North where an agrarian reform, a Labour Code, equality of the sexes, and nationalization of industry were instituted, and the political unity of all the progressive forces was forged under the leadership of the Korean Workers' Party.

In December 1948, the Soviet troops withdrew from the North in fulfilment of the Moscow Agreements, but the United States continued to act as an occupation power in the South.

On June 25, 1950, the United States launched its aggression in Korea with the main objective of stopping and defeating the growth and expansion of the socialist forces in Asia in general and in Korea in particular.

China, which then had a different political orientation than today, sent one million volunteers to fight the American aggression and help the Korean people.

In the course of the three years of the war, Washington used its whole military potential and forced the United Nations to participate in the conflict, but eventually an armistice was agreed upon. Under Article 4 of the Armistice Agreement, discussion on the withdrawal of foreign troops and adoption of measures for the re-unification of Korea were to begin three months after the cease-fire. Nevertheless, during the political talks in Panmunjon and at the International Conference on Korea, held in Geneva in 1954, the United States and the Seoul regime rejected all proposals aimed at achieving self-determination of the Korean people.

Acting against this objective, Washington imposed on South Korea an Economic and Technical Assistance Treaty, signed on February 8, 1961, which, together with the Mutual Defence Treaty of August 1953, permitted the indefinite extension of the United States occupation of South Korea, as well as its political, economic and military control.

Since then, the United States has kept more than 40,000 troops armed with the most modern weapons, including long-range missiles with nuclear warheads, stationed in South Korea, and has committed thousands of provocations against and violations of the air, sea and land space of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea.

On August 6, 1971, Kim Il Sung opened the way for contacts between the North and the South through their respective Red Cross organizations, and the first contacts were indeed made in Panmunjon on September 20 of the same year. That dialogue made it possible to carry on at the same time secret high-level talks between the two sides, which finally led to the publication of a joint declaration on July 4, 1972.

However, the Seoul regime had accepted the dialogue only to deceive public opinion in the South, as demonstrated by the appointment as head of the delegation to the negotiations of the Director of the South Korean Central Intelligence Agency (K-CIA), and the proposal of June 23, 1973, that both parties should become members of the United Nations.

The People's Democratic Republic of Korea countered this move with a new five-point proposal for re-unification, one point of which suggested the use of a single name for the whole of Korea—the Confederate Republic of Koryo—which would enter the United Nations after complete re-unification had been achieved.

The participation of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea in the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries dates back to a ministerial meeting held in Peru in 1975.

In recent years, Democratic Korea has continued concentrating its efforts on the improvement of the living conditions of its populations and on achieving the peaceful re-unification of the nation.

This was manifested in the decisions adopted at a plenary session of the Central Committee of the Korean Workers' Party, held in December 1978. Throughout that year, Pyongyang constantly denounced the intentions of the United States and the regime in Seoul to perpetuate the artificial divison of the Korean Peninsula and the tension there.

On March 5, 1978, Korea officially protested against the large-scale joint South Korean-United States military manoeuvres code-named "Team Spirit", held every year from 1953 to the present, notwithstanding the opposition of world public opinion.

A month later, the White House indefinitely postponed the withdrawal of the American occupation troops from South Korea, which it had earlier announced for obvious propaganda reasons. On the contrary, those troops have in fact been re-inforced.

Moreover, beginning in September 1979, the Pentagon ordered a systematic surveillance of the territory of the People's Democratic Republic of Korea from its SR-71 spy planes.

Nevertheless, the North continues in its efforts to enter into dialogue with the South, which would lead to the re-unification of the Korean nation. This positive attitude permitted the visit to Pyongyang of a U.S. Congressman and of a former official of the U.S. Department of State in June and September of 1980 respectively.

On February 1, 1979, the decision was taken to suspend any actions or statements that could be considered hostile to Seoul, a move which made the authorities in the South feel obliged to accept in November of the following year the resumption of the talks launched in 1972.

Economy: Agriculture and industry. The economically active population is 5,993,000 (35.1% of the total population), of which number 3,140,000 people are engaged in agriculture. The principal crops are rice (4,700,000 metric tons), millet (440,000 tons), soya (330,000 tons), barley (280,000 tons), maize (2,200,000 tons), oats (60,000 tons), rye (8,000 tons), and sorghum (60,000 tons).

Those crops, together with cotton, potatoes, yams, citrus fruit, apples, peaches, pears, tobacco, wheat, vegetables, and hemp are produced on roughly 17% of the country's area.

The region around Kaesong is famous for its cultivation of Ginseng, a native plant of the Korean Peninsula, to which many medicinal properties are attributed and which is a considerable source of foreign-exchange income.

More than 5 million cu.m of timber are produced in the country annually.

Korea possesses considerable reserves of different minerals, particularly tungsten, sulphur, coal, zinc, copper, iron, gold, salt, magnesium, phosphates, lead, silver, and graphite.

The People's Democratic Republic of Korea had to completely reconstruct its economy after the agressive war waged against it by the United States from 1950 to 1953. It was aided in its reconstruction efforts by the socialist states and mainly by the Soviet Union.

The national budget amounts to 15,293,200,000 wons (one U.S. dollar = 0.932 won), while the gross national product has risen to 12,530,000,000 dollars.

The authorities are pursing a policy aimed at eliminating the differences between rural and urban areas, at improving the working conditions in all economic sectors, and at promoting greater involvement of women in the national economy. Efforts are being made to mechanize agricultural work, to make general the use of chemical fertilizers, to introduce modern irrigation methods, and to extend electrification to the whole country.

Under the economic plan which ended in 1977, the country produced more than 30,000 million kWh of electricity, 53,000,000 metric tons of coal, 4,000,000 tons of steel, 3,000,000 tons of laminates, 3,800,000 tons of iron, 3,000,000 tons of fertilizers and 8,000,000 tons of cement.

Other important industries included fishing and textile-manufacture. The latter had developed its own national production of synthetic fibres. There are three factories turning out farm machinery—in Kumsong, Wonsan and Chumson.

Under the first seven-year plan (1971-1977), taxes levied on income were abolished and the real income of the population rose by 70-80%.

The country's 10,500 km of railway lines are almost 100% electrified, while its merchant fleet totals roughly 90,000 tons.

Government: The People's Democratic Republic of Korea is defined as an independent socialist state based on an alliance of workers and peasants. The supreme power in the state is exercised by a Supreme People's Assembly in which every member represents 50,000 inhabitants. The country is administratively divided into nine provinces and two special-status cities (Pyongyang and Kaesong).

The members of the People's Assembly are elected in 579 electoral districts from among the best workers by all citizens older than seventeen years.

In the last elections, held on 11 November 1977, Kim Il Sung was re-elected as President. In December, the provisions of the second seven-year plan (1978-1984) were approved.

Other organs of state power are the Local People's Assemblies, the People's Committees and the Administrative Committees, which are elected every fourth year in the provinces and every second year in the administrative districts.

The Constitution guarantees to every citizen, irrespective of sex, the freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, of association, of demonstrations, of religion, and of material, health and cultural resources.

Democratic Korea is active as an observer in the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and is invited to debates on the Korean question in the United Nations. It was admitted as a member to the World Health Organization.

It is a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions, the World Federation of Democratic Youth, the International Democratic Federation of Women, the International Union of Students, the World Peace Council, the International Organization of Journalists, and the Asian Sports Federation.

Armed forces: The constant tension and threat of aggression by the United States and the regime in Seoul have forced the People's Democratic Republic of Korea to keep more than half a million men in arms.

The Korean People's Army, founded in 1948, is equipped with the latest military technology which is placed in the hands of workers and peasants.

Organizations: The Korean Workers' Party, founded on October 10, 1945, on a Marxist-Leninist basis, is the supreme organ of political leadership in the People's Democratic Republic of Korea.

The party held its Sixth Congress on October 10 to 14, 1980, after a lapse of ten years. Kim Il Sung, who was re-elected its General Secretary, once again proposed re-unification as the focal point of the country's policy. Specifically, he urged the authorities in the South to form a Confederate Republic of Koryo.

The country's progressive forces are associated in the National Front for the Re-Unification of Korea, which was founded on June 25, 1949. The organizations of the people include the General Federation of Trade Unions, the Union of Farm Workers, the Union of Socialist Working Youth, and the Union of Democratic Women.

There are two other political parties—the Korean Democratic Party, headed by Kang Ryang Uk, Vice-President of the Republic, and the Chondokio Chong-U Party.

Education: The state devotes the major percentage of the gross national product to education which is compulsory up to the tenth grade and one more year will be added to it soon.

There are 3,000,000 pupils attending primary schools, 1,200,000 students are enrolled in secondary schools, 285,000 in vocational schools, 156,000 in higher schools, 200,000 in education institutes, and 17,000 in the University of Pyongyang.

There are more than 90,000 teachers and professors providing instruction at the different levels of education, and the number of educational centres exceeds 10,600.

The educational system is supplemented by 37,000 nursery schools and 14,800 day-care centres, attended by 3,500,000 children.

In accordance with official directives, all students combine their studies with manual work.

The principal cities have large Pioneer Palaces where children go after classes to develop their artistic, sports or professional talents or to further their patriotic and defence-oriented education.

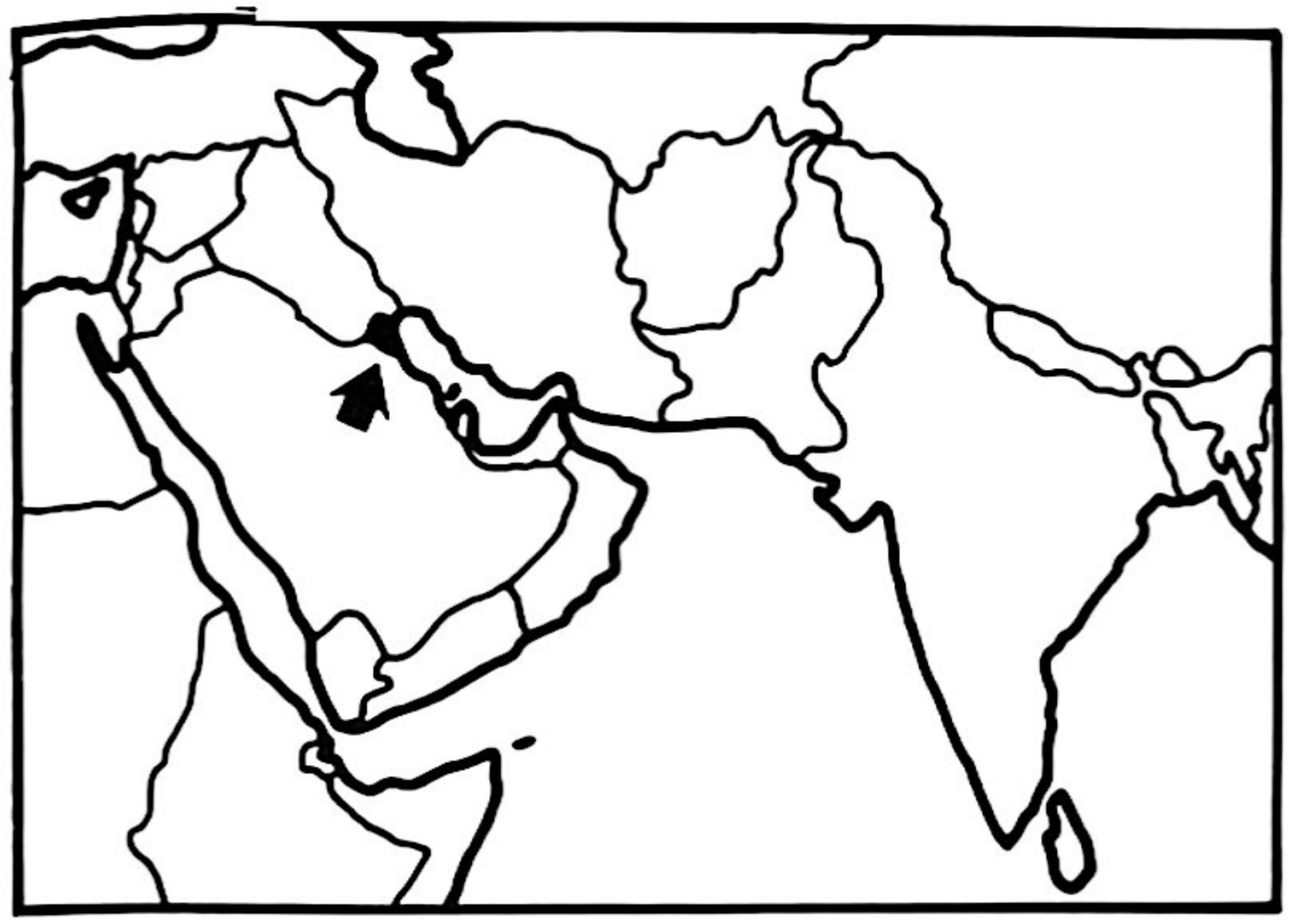
Public health: More than 14% of the national budget is allocated for the free provision of medical and hospital care.

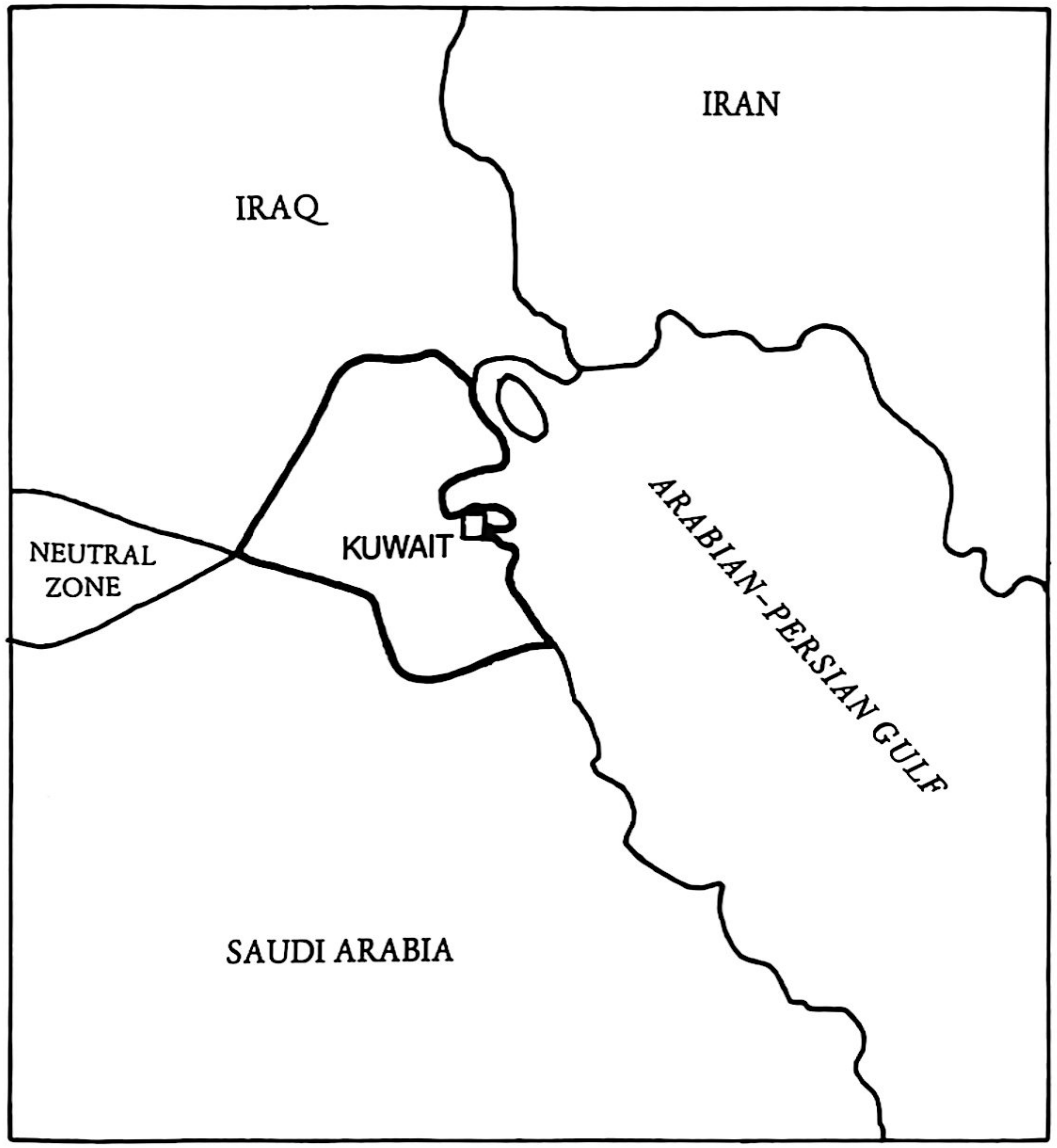
There are more than 64 large hospitals and some 250 smaller centres with a total capacity of 100,000 beds in the network of public health facilities.

In 1980, a modern maternity hospital was opened in Pyongyang, which is equipped with the most up-to-date medical technology.

Religion: A small part of the population practices Buddhism, Shamanism and Chundo Kyo, which combines elements of Buddhism and Christianity.

KUWAIT





Official name: The State of Kuwait.
Area: 17,818 sq.km.
Borders: In the east, Kuwait touches on the Arabian-Persian Gulf, in the northwest it borders on Iraq and in the south on Saudi Arabia.
Population: 1,272,000 inhabitants in 1979. Of this total, 71% live in urban areas. The annual rate of population growth was 6.1% in 1980. The native, Kuwaiti population are ethnic Arabs and constitute 47% of the present inhabitants of the state. The rest are immigrants mostly from Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, Syria, and Yemen.
Capital: Kuwait City (197,000 inhabitants with its surroundings).
Principal cities: Hawalli and Salmiyah.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: June 19, National Independence Day.
Geography: Kuwait is located in the northwesternmost corner of the Arabia-Persian Gulf. Its territory is almost completely flat and arid except for a few hillocks not exceeding 150 m in elevation. The northern part of the territory is extremely rocky, while the south is sandy.

The coast, straight and uniform, has only one deep bay on which the capital, Kuwait City, is located. The climate is subtropical, hot but turning to temperate in the winter season. The hottest month is August, when the temperature varies from 30°C to 50°C; the coldest month is January with temperatures ranging from 9°C to 16°C, sometimes dropping to zero.

Rainfall is scant. The driest months are June to September. December is the wettest month with an average rainfall of 28 mm.

The desert climate requires water to be supplied from the sea by desalination in a modern plant which has a daily capacity of some 35 million litres of fresh water.

Brief history: Historical studies and archaeological finds have shown that the territory of present-day Kuwait has been the scene from times immemorial of busy commercial traffic with peoples from the most remote Antiquity and later with the Greeks and Romans.

In the 7th century, the Arab conqueror Khalid brough Islam to the area. In the 16th and 17th centuries it was dominated by the Ottoman Turks. When the Portuguese reached its coast in the 16th century, it was still called Koreen. At the beginning of the 18th century, English and Dutch sailors began to call it by its present name, Kuwait, which was derived from the Arabic word *kut*, meaning small fortress.

At that time, Kuwait's economy was based on fishing and cultivation of pearls, as well as on the utilization of the strategic position of the small harbour surrounded by desert. Its inhabitants were descendants of the Utubi tribe, originating in the centre of the Arabian peninsula, which in the early 18th century found a supply of fresh water in the area.

The development of the community was characterized by tribal relations and rivalry with various groups of peoples coming from the interior of the peninsula. On the other hand, the almost complete absence of any natural resources forced the inhabitants to turn to commerce with the outside world, for which they had a favourable geographical position astride important trading routes between India, Persia and the Arabian Peninsula.

In 1716, the British East India Company, which was founded in 1660, built the port of Kuwait, thus laying the foundations of the present-day capital, as a way station between England and India. Since then, the British Crown began to build up its influence in the Gulf and to erode the Turkish positions there.

In 1756, the Al Sabah dynasty assumed the rule of the territory with British support; the first prince, Sabah ben Gaber, also known as Sabah I, was enthroned in 1757.

Later, when in 1896 the then Sheik Mabarek Al Sabah assumed power in open confrontation with the Ottoman Empire, Kuwait once again sought British protection. Three years later, in 1899, a treaty was signed, whereby Great Britain recognized the independence of Kuwait under the condition that the Sheikh and his successors would not establish relations with any other foreign power without British consent. This treaty turned the small state into a virtual British colony and Britain removed the threat posed to her interests by the proposed construction by tsarist Russia of a railway line running through Syria and Iraq all the way to Kuwait. The treaty did not place Britain at that time in control of Kuwait's petroleum, which she succeeded, however, in achieving in 1913 through a pact concluded with the Sheikh.

The first enterprise for exploiting Kuwait's petroleum resources was established with British and United States capital in 1934. It was the Kuwait Oil Company set up jointly by the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co. and the American-owned Gulf Exploration Co. with the same capital shares and with a concession for 75 years.

The first oil well went into operation in 1938, but in the course of World War II, which soon followed, production was suspended. However, in 1946, six million barrels were extracted, in 1950 production rose to 126 million barrels, by 1954 to 246 million barrels, and then it skyrocketed, filling the coffers of the Kuwait Oil Company and the British Petroleum Company which controlled the exploitation of the country's petroluem resources until their nationalization.

The presumed half-and-half divison between the monopolies and the State of Kuwait was realized only with respect to the proceeds of the sale of crude petroluem. The profits derived from the transport, refining and sales were netted by the foreign companies alone.

The fabulous gains coming to the state gave rise to a singular form of distribution, which, in turn, produced a powerful and influential national bourgeoisie. This distribution was not, however, shared by the immigrants since the law favoured the native-born. The former did not remain passive though. On numerous occasions they demanded an improvement of their living conditions and, together with the progressive national forces, called for lesser dependence of Kuwait on imperialist interests.

In 1950, Sheikh Abdallah Salem Al Sabah assumed power and initiated a development programme which was to give a new face to the nation. In 1960, jointly with Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq and Venezuala, Kuwait founded the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). It is also a member of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

Since 1959, resolute demands were raised for revision of the 1899 treaty with Great Britain which, in order to prevent the possibility of popular revolt, signed a new document whereby Kuwait regained its sovereignty on June 19, 1961.

From that moment on, the policy pursued by Sheikh Abdallah Al Salem Al Sabah was directed at consolidation of the accumulated national capital because since gaining its formal independence, Kuwait enjoyed autonomy in pursuing its own foreign policy.

Kuwait could dispose of vast sums derived from petroleum, a fact which opened new prospects of development. The accelerated pace of transformation these prospects implied called for the importation of labour and specialists for the petroleum industry as well as other industries and services which were being simultaneously built up.

In 1962, a constitution was adopted which provided for the establishment of a 50-member National Assembly. That very same year, the Assembly met for the first time, but in 1965, the first crisis arose between that body and the ruler who felt compelled to form a stronger cabinet.

In November 1965, the Heir Apparent, Sheikh Sabah Al Salem Al Sabah, who had held the post of Foreign Minister and Vice-President of the Council since 1962, assumed power. During his reign, the government pursued a policy of protection of national resources and a foreign policy of cooperation with the Arab world and with the developing nations.

In 1971, the National Asembly was already elected by popular vote, although the right to vote was not yet enjoyed by women, illiterates and the foreign workers. Nevertheless, in spite of these limitations, progressive sentiments and opinions penetrated into the Assembly. The pressure exerted by the foreign majority which had no access to parliamentary life, together with the ominous impact of the world-wide capitalist crisis, created an internal situation the regime found difficult to solve and therefore abandoned its policy of seeming tolerance.

In 1972 the Kuwait government launched a drive to nationalize the Kuwait Oil Company. In that same year it succeeded in acquiring 25% of the company's shares, in 1974 increased its participation to 60%, and in 1975 assumed absolute control of the enterprise, nationalizing, in addition, all the other petroleum companies. Although it was still dependent almost exclusively on the British Petroleum Company and on the Gulf Oil Company for the marketing of its petroleum, by this move Kuwait advanced by 51 years the re-acquisition of its petroleum wealth which would have remained in foreign hands until the year 2026 under the treaties signed in 1934 and 1951.

In October 1973, the Arab petroleum-producing countries formed a common front which agreed to double petroleum prices and cut production in order to preserve the existing reserves of crude petroleum.

Kuwait Oil Co., which produced 90% of the country's petroelum in 1975, merged with the Kuwait Oil Gas Energy Co. (KOGEC) by acquiring 60% of its shares and the right to obtain the rest in 1979. In 1975, the last parliamentary elections were held and brought defeat to the most conservative forces. It should be borne in mind that tribal and religious sentiments rather than practically non-existent political organizations prevail among the electorate and that although all citizens older than twenty-one years are eligible to vote, the fact that foreign workers are excluded from voting reduced the total number of voters to 50,000.

At the end of 1976, the Emir suspended the constitution of 1962 and ordered the formation of a committee to study its amendment. At the same time he dissolved the National Assembly and provisionally transferred legislative power to himself and the Council of Ministers. The Emir also put into effect a law governing publications, which gives the government the right to suspend for the maximum period of two years or to revoke the license of all periodicals and radio stations, if the government feels that they run counter to national interests or that they receive subsidies from another power. The press in Kuwait is considered to be the most diverse and free in the Middle East after the Lebanese press.

The Emir declared that the measures taken were an answer to a deteriorating internal situation and announced that the project of a constitutional reform would be submitted to a referendum within four years.

Sheikh Abdallah Salem Al Sabah died in December 1977 and was succeeded by the Heir Apparent, Jaber Ahmed Al Sabah, who had been running the affairs of state for a number of years because of the Emir's illness.

The new Emir appointed as his Heir Apparent the Sheikh Saad Al Abdallah Al Salem Al Sabah, who held the post of Minister of Defence; in keeping with tradition, he would also hold the premiership. The Prime Minister is a member of the Al Salem family, while the Emir belongs to the Al Jaber family, which are the two branches of the royal dynasty that has traditionally ruled Kuwait.

One of the first moves taken by the new government was an amnesty which affected some 1000 prisoners, half of whom were released and the rest had their sentences reduced. This was the first ever measure of its kind taken since Kuwait's independence. A few days later the government resigned in order to permit the formation of a new cabinet. Emir Jaber Ahmed Al Sabah accepted the resignation and ordered the formation of a new government within 72 hours. This resignation was a simple formality necessary after the death of the previous Emir.

Saad Al Abdallah, the new Heir Apparent and Prime Minister, actively participated in the political life of Kuwait and his appointment was favourably received in all of the country's political circles.

In 1981, the first steps were taken towards a return to parliamentary life. In January, an announcement was published of the appointment by the Emir of a commission made up of 35 former members of parliament, which would study the amendment of the constitution. Elections were announced for February, in which 50 new members of the National Assembly were to be elected, still on the basis of individual aspirations since no political parties are permitted.

In its foreign policy, Kuwait has pursued a consistent line of support of the Palestinian cause in the context of the Middle East conflict, as well as of increased assistance to the developing countries by the petroleum-exporting countries.

In 1963, Kuwait established diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and was admitted to the United Nations. In subsequent years, it expanded its contacts with the socialist countries, formalizing its relations with Bulgaria, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Rumania. This is also true of its relations with the developing countries. Kuwait joined the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the session in Cairo in 1964 and currently participates in the work of the Movement's Coordination Bureau.

Economy: Kuwait's economy is based on the exploitation of the country's petroleum resources, although in recent years it has been greatly diversified. In 1979, 126 million metric tons of crude petroleum were produced, which makes Kuwait the fourth largest producer of this commodity among the OPEC countries. According to OPEC figures, its petroleum reserves are estimated at 70,000 million barrels (i.e. the largest in the world after Saudi Arabia, the Soviet Union and probably Iraq) and at the present rate of extraction should last some 90 years.

In 1978, Kuwait also produced 392,000 cu.m of natural gas and in additon to crude petroleum exported 142 million barrels of petroleum derivatives and 13 million barrels of liquid gas.

The Kuwait Oil Company operates a refinery and gas liquification plant at Ahmadi. Kuwait has a total of three refineries which at the end of 1978 had a combined daily capacity of 645,000 barrels.

An asphalt producing plant was opened in October 1978 with an annual capacity of 250,000 tons for domestic use. Kuwait is also investing in expansion of its facilities for the production of propane and butane gas.

The Kuwait Oil Tankers Company (KOTC), originally founded with 49% state ownership and later fully nationalized, operates a fleet of twelve tankers with a total tonnage of 2.31 million, which is the largest tanker fleet in the Middle East.

In spite of its rapid growth, the non-petroleum industry contributes only a small amount to the gross national product (5% in 1976). Nevertheless, it employs close to 30,000 workers and produces mainly processed food and beverages, textiles, metal products, furniture and paper.

Two large industrial areas have been under development since 1965 at Shuwaikh and

Shuaiba with petrochemical, fertilizer and cement plants. There are plans for the construction of other factories for the production of automobile chassis, synthetic rubber, aluminium articles, plastics, glassware, and sugar.

Agricultural production is greatly limited by the climate, the shortage of water and poor soil. Only 9% of Kuwait's total area can be cultivated. In the mid-1970s, agriculture employed some 7,5000 workers and accounted for 1% of the GNP. Kuwait imports four-fifths of the food it needs, although the government is trying to correct this situation by a policy of encouraging cattle raising and farm production.

The fishing industry is rather important because aof an abundance of shrimp and lobsters in Kuwait's territorial waters. The Kuwait Overseas Maritime and Fisheries Company, which operates 170 fishing boats, is the world's largest shrimp-fishing company and extends its operations into the Indian Ocean.

Kuwait's production of electric power is expected to rise to 4,374 MW by 1985, while the ouput of distilled water from the sea should increase to 232 million gallons a day. In per capita use of electricity, Kuwait is third in the world, preceded only by the United States and Switzerland.

The country has an excellent network of roads, an international airport and two important ports—Shuwaikh and Shuaiba—as well as three petroleum-loading terminals at Mina Al Ahmal, Mina Abdullah and Mina Saud.

The national budget for the fiscal year 1979-1980 was 2,500 million dinars. 83% of the government's income is the proceeds of petroleum exports. A five-year development plan was put into effect between 1976 and 1981, providing for investments of 4,885 million dinars, mainly to finance housing construction, development of the manufacturing industry, power-generating and desalination facilities, and social services.

Kuwait's exports in 1978 exceeded the value of 10,450 million dollars, going mainly to Japan, Great Britain, Italy, and South Korea. On the other hand, imports, valued at some 4,600 million dollars came from Japan, the United States, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany and other countries.

According to official data, Kuwait's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 2,613 million dollars in May 1979. The Kuwaiti Arab Economic Development Fund, established in 1961, has provided low-interest loans to more than 45 developing countries. Kuwaiti investments in the United States and Europe were estimated at 26,700 million dollars in 1977, not including private investments and those of the royal family.

Per capita income in 1978 was 14,884 dollars, which is one of the highest in the world. The national currency is the Kuwaiti dinar whose rate of exchange in September 1980 was 0.26 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Kuwait is an Emirate whose rulers must be descendants of Sheikh Mubarak al Sabah, the founder of the modern state. It was governed constitutionally from 1963 to August 1976, when the Emir decreed the suspension of the 1962 constitution and the dissolution of the National Assembly was announced in 1981.

Armed forces: Kuwait's armed forces have more than 10,000 men. 8,000 of whom serve in the army and 2,000 in the air force. There is also a small naval force of approximately 200 men. Military expenditures exceed 2,000 million dollars annually. Since 1978, all Kuwaitis must serve in the armed forces and a system of reserves was organized involving only native-born individuals.

Organizations: There are no political parties in Kuwait. Petroleum workers, public employees and many members of several workers' organizations are associated in the Federation of Trade Unions, founded in 1967, which has more than 12,000 members and which is associated with the World Federation of Trade Unions.

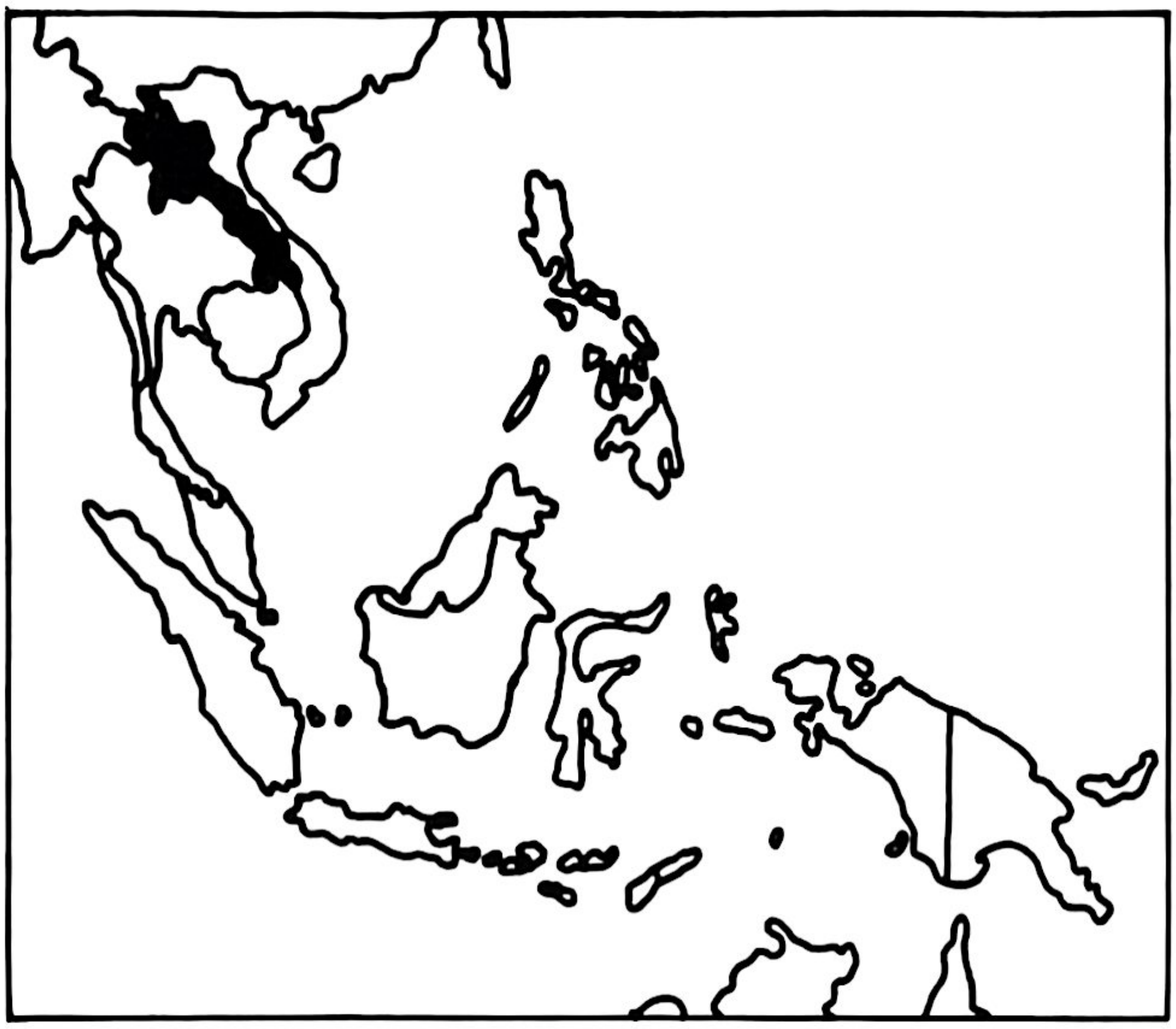
Education and sports: Although it was estimated in 1975, that 60% of Kuwait's population was literate, today the country has the most complete educational system in all of the Middle East. More than 180 new schools were built between 1977 and 1980, and a new university is expected to be completed in 1982 at Shuwaikh with facilities for 15,000 students. Currently, there are more than 200,000 pupils and students in Kuwait and the university has an enrollment of 9,375 students and a teaching staff of more than 400.

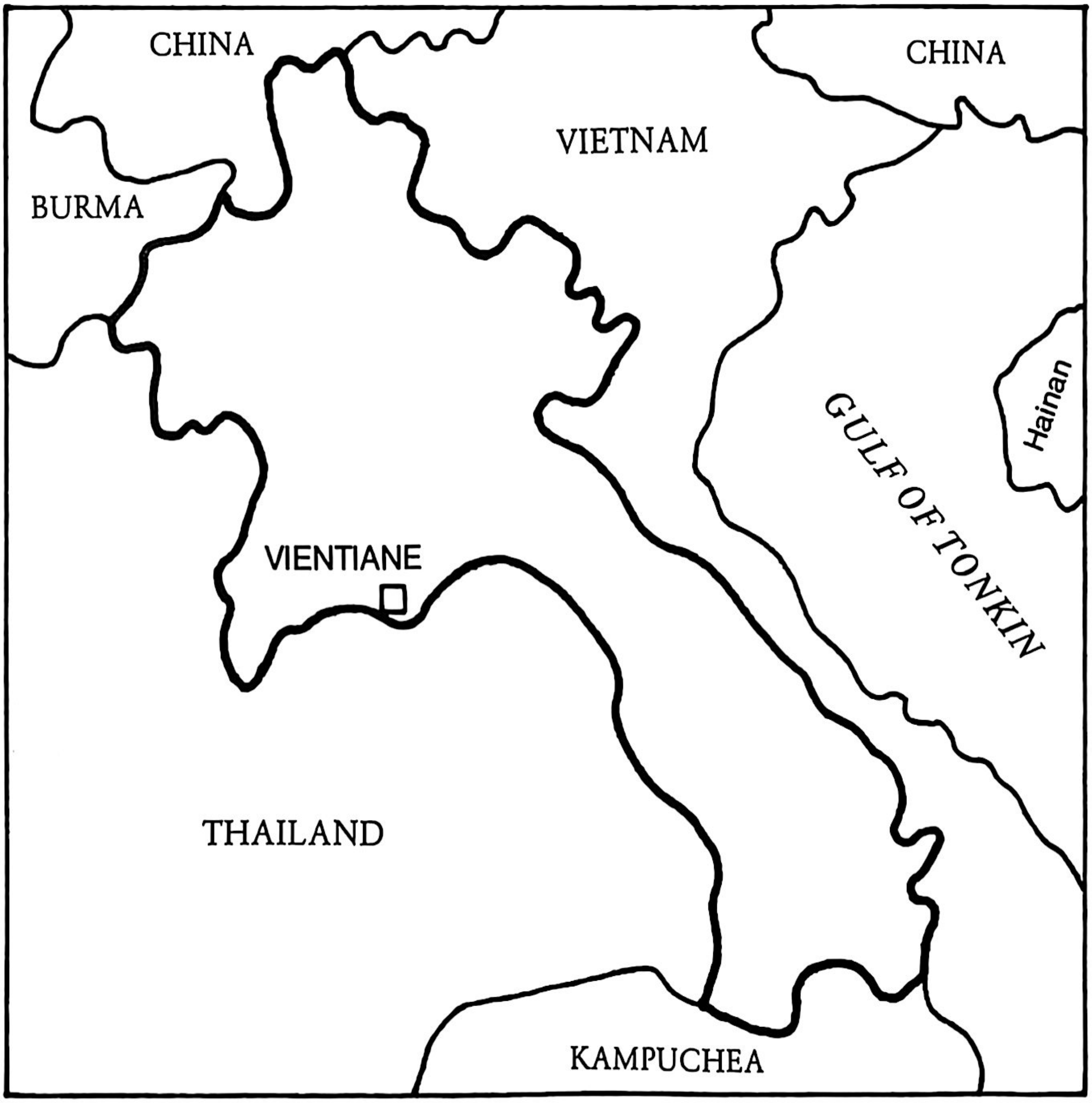
A plan of construction of sports facilities is being implemented. The most popular sport in the country is football.

Public health: Medical services are free. There are 57 hospitals in the country with 4,178 beds and there are plans to have on average one hospital bed for every 200 inhabitants. In 1980, investments were realized for the construction of six new hospitals and the reconstruction of others, and a plan was announced for the period ending in the year 2000, under which the level of medical services is to be raised and, in particular, the infant mortality rate is to be reduced.

Religion: 95% of the population are Sunni Moslems. 4% are Roman Catholics.

LAOS




CHINA
CHINA
VIETNAM
BURMA
Hainan
GULF OF TONKIN
VIENTIANE
THAILAND
KAMPUCHEA

Official name: The Lao People's Democratic Republic.
Area: 236,800 sq.km.
Borders: The Lao People's Democratic Republic borders in the north on China, in the south on the People's Republic of Kampuchea, in the east on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, in the west on the Kingdom of Thailand, and in the northwest on Burma.
Population: 3,750,000 inhabitants. There are 68 ethnic groups, the principal of which are made up of the Lao-Lum of Thai origin. This group, which is the largest and most advanced, inhabits the plains along the rivers. The Lao-Thung, who are of Indonesian origin, inhabit the marginal zones of the forests and mountain ranges. There are also Vietnamese, Chinese and Indian minorities. Most of the population is concentrated in the valleys of the Mekong River and its tributaries. The annual rate of population growth is 2.4%.
Capital: Vientiane
Principal cities: Savannakhet, Pakse and Luang Prabang.
Languages: Lao is the official language.
Public holidays: December 2, abolition of the monarchy and establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (1975).
Geography: Laos is the only landlocked country in Southeast Asia. The longest extension of its frontier in the east borders on Vietnam, while in the west the frontier line is formed for all practical purposes by the Mekong, the third most important river in Asia. The Mekong has its source in Tibet, runs through the length of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, crosses Kampuchea, and in the south enters Vietnam in what used to be Cochinchina, where it drains through three channels into the South China Sea.

Laos is characterized by its mountainous relief, which is a part of the westernmost of the three mountain ranges of the Indochinese Peninsula; the northern part of the country is especially mountainous. The easternmost extensions of the Himalayas cross Laotian territory from the northwest to the southeast. Mt. Phou Dia, 2,819 m. high, is the highest elevation.

The south of the "Land of a Million Elephants" is less rugged. In the northwest extends the fertile valley of the Mekong.

88% of Laotian territory is covered with bushland and impenetrable forests. Land suited for farming, while extremely fertile, is scarce. Only 6.3% of the land is used for agriculture, the remaining 5.7% of the cultivable land lying permanently fallow.

The most important rivers are the Mekong and its tributaries, the Beng, the Ou, the Tha and the Khan.

The climate of Laos is dominated by the monsoons. The winter monsoon, blowing from the continent, is dry, while the summer monsoon, coming in from the sea, is rainy and wet. Temperatures vary from 25°C to 30°C throughout the year. The annual rainfall is 2,000 mm.

Brief history: The first mentions of the existence of Laos relate to the year 1353, when Prince Fa Ngum founded the kingdom of Lang Chang (Kingdom of a Million Elephants) and established his royal seat in Luang Prabang. For many years this territory had been divided between the kingdoms of Kampuchea and Siam. Fa Ngum married the daughter of the King Angkor (in Kampuchea) and with his help marched on Luang Prabang, accompanied by a number of erudite Buddhists, sculptors and artisans. At the end of the 14th century, the Lao people constituted a large part of the population of the kingdom. In the course of time, Lang Chang took the name of Laos, even though its population is made up of more than 60 ethnic groups.

The ancient state suffered from many invasions launched from the neighbouring kingdoms and after a series of Thai and Annamite raids and extended feudal wars, a large part of the territory of Lang Chang was absorbed at the end of the 18th century by the kingdoms of Siam (Thailand) and Annam (the central part of Vietnam). In the 19th century, Laos was divided into two kingdoms—those of Luang Prabang and of Vientiane—and the French created a third one, Champassac, which fell under Siamese control.

At the end of the 19th century, the European powers divided Asia as war booty. Britain dominated India, Malaysia and Burma, and subdued Siam but allowed it to maintain a fictitious independence. France gave the name of French Indochina to a group of territories with different features—Cochinchina, Annam and Tonkin, which were later turned into Vietnam, Cambodia (Kampuchea) and Laos.

In 1893, following the conclusion of an agreement between France and Burma, Laos passed under direct French administration. Portuguese and British colonialism appeared on the scene in Laos, but it was France which consolidated her domination of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula by occupying Vientiane in that year.

A French Governor-General had under his control all of Indochina and was assisted by a High Council.

When World War I broke out, France tried to exploit to the utmost all the natural and human resources in that conflict. Indochina had to supply the metropolitan power with 50,000 troops and 49,000 workers mobilized by force to serve the French.

In October 1930, the revolutionaries of the Indochinese Peninsula founded the Communist Party of Indochina with the basic task of "fighting against French imperialism and regaining national independence", as well as of "fighting against feudalism and giving the land to the peasants".

Following that year, the international situation developed at a rapid pace. The fascist powers of Europe and Asia, encouraged by the impotence and even complicity of the Western governments, surged ahead.

At the beginning of 1939, Indochina experienced stepped-up oppression, especially after the Popular Front in France had been replaced by a rightist government, preparing for war and trying to liquidate past reforms. In these preparations the French government decided that Indochina should supply France with 1,500,000 soldiers and workers, that is 15 times more than it did during World War I. In this effort, France lengthened throughout Indochina the working hours from the old 48 per week to 60 for men and 54 for women, in addition to raising the taxes.

After France had fallen in 1940, French colonialism reached an understanding with Japanese fascism which made the best possible use of the French administrative apparatus for exploiting to the utmost the resources of Indochina.

Two years before the fall of the Vichy government, Charles de Gaulle promised the "liberation of Indochina", a statement which met with hardly any response on the peninsula.

As a result of the Japanese defeat in World War II and of the resistance put up by the Lao people against Japanese colonialism, the independence of Laos was proclaimed in October 12, 1945.

The King, Sisavang Vong, an old collaborator with the French, refused to recognize the provisional government which emerged from the proclamation of independence and which was led by Souvanna Phouma. The King's move produced a political crisis, which suited French imperialism for recovering its colonial possessions in Southeast Asia lost as a result of the war. However, a few weeks after the Japanese had fled, the British Southeast Asian Fleet landed troops in Saigon for the declared purpose of "helping to clean up the area from the Japanese and to cooperate in assisting the people". On March 6, 1946, the French "recognized" the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, but in reality this was the beginning of a long series of military and financial manoeuvres designed to dislodge the

Vietnamese from power. France recovered Kampuchea, seized Saigon, Hue and Hanoi, and took control of the port of Haiphong, the second most important in Indochina.

On March 21, French planes, tanks and artillery launched a violent offensive along the Mekong to Thakhet, a strategic point dominating the network of land communications leading to Vietnam and straddling the road linking Kampuchea and Laos. On that day the French Air Force dropped hundreds of bombs on that area and within a few hours thousands of the town's inhabitants were killed. The Pathet Lao forces, fewer in numbers and with inferior weapons than the French army, put up brave resistance. Step by step, the colonists advanced. Five months after the battle of Thakhet, the French controlled the roads and principal towns in Laos. The provisional government withdrew to a place in Thailand.

Between 1946 and 1950, the French colonialists, who had re-established in power their old collaborator, King Sisavang Vong, put into effect a plan of "pacification" of Laos. In the same period, Prince Souphanouvong organized a resistance movement and established contact with patriotic elements leading the different ethnic groups.

In 1949, France granted Laos formal independence but retained actual power. Prince Souvanna Phouma and other members of the first provisional government agreed to participate in the new government.

The resistance forces, which had fought against Japanese occupation and French colonialism, refused to accept the truncated independence offered to their country and in August 1950 formed the Neo Lao Itsala (United National Front) as well as a revolutionary government headed by Prince Souphanouvong, the half-brother of Souvanna Phouma. This government had its seat in Sam Neua province. The armed branch of the Neo Lao Itsala, the Pathet Lao (the Land of the Lao), subsequently played an important role in the epic of Dien Bien Phu, when they cut the supply lines of the French troops who were fighting the Vietnamese Liberation Army.

With the defeat of French colonialism in Indochina, consummated in the Geneva Agreements of 1954, Laos was accorded a special status which provided for the formation of a national coalition government and the unification of the armed forces of the different political factions, and which recognized the sovereignty, independence and neutrality of the Kingdom of Laos.

Nevertheless, it was not until 1957 that the provisions of the Geneva Agreements were put into effect. A coalition government was formed in Vientiane, headed by Souvanna Phouma, in which the three main political forces in the country took part—the left, headed by Souphanouvong, the neutralists, led by Souvanna Phouma, and the rightists whose leaders were Prince Boun Oum and General Phoumi Nosavan. A year later, Boun Oum declared his opposition to the royal government in Vientaine and troops under the command of Nosavan, supported by the United States and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), overthrew Souvanna Phouma.

The new government, led by Phoui Sananikone, launched a persecution of members of the Neo Lao Haksat—the Patriotic Front of Laos, the heir of the Neo Lao Itsala—and of the progressive members of the neutralist faction. This broke up the government coalition.

Internal conflicts within the rightist camp caused the fall of the Sananikone government by a military coup staged by Nosavan, who assumed power in January 1960. In August of the same year, Colonel Kong Le, commanding the Second Batallion of Paratroops, seized Vientiane and re-established Souvanna Phouma in power. This move was endorsed by the Neo Lao Haksat and the neutralist movement.

The growing political and military assistance provided by the United States to the rightist faction, together with the division of the country into two areas of influence. provoked a civil war between, on the one side, the Pathet Lao and the neutralist troops, and, on the other side, Nosavan's insurgent army which was getting military assistance from SEATO.

Making use of Thai territory and assisted by troops from Thailand, South Vietnam and the Philippines, Nosavan occupied Vientiane. Nevertheless, the strategic Plain of Jars and the northern provinces were liberated by the Pathet Lao and the neutralist forces.

The military collapse of the pro-U.S. forces and the favourable international situation made it possible in 1962 to hold a new conference in Geneva, which ended the hostilities and under the signature of fourteen nations confirmed the neutrality, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Laos.

However, the government which emerged from the Geneva accords was unable to exercise power. The United States, one of the signatories of the Geneva Agreements, stepped up its drive to strengthen the rightist faction, blocked the legitimate government of Souvanna Phouma, and its agents unleashed a wave of terror in Vientiane, which forced the ministers of Neo Lao Haksat and of the neutralist left to establish their seat in Xien Kuang province. In April 1963, Foreign Minister Quinin Pholsena and other neutralist personalities were assassinated.

On April 19, 1964, a coup d'etat took place in Vietntiane, inspired by Washington and carried out by officers representing the treacherous bourgeoisie and led by Generals Kuprasith and Siho. The coup removed Nosavan from the political scene and placed the army under the control of Prince Souvanna Phouma.

The crisis brought about the disintegration of the neutralist movement. Kong Le, promoted to the rank of general, became the head of the right wing of the neutralists and collaborated with the pro-American faction. The left-wing neutralists, led by Colonel Deuan, joined forces with the Neo Lao Haksat.

After the coup of April 1964, the Souvanna Phouma government ceased to be a coalition.

The Pathet Lao, re-named the Lao People's Army on October 12, controlled three fifths of the country and, together with the left-wing neutralists, almost three quarters of all Laotian territory.

From then on, the patriotic forces of Laos waged a consistent battle for the complete liberation of their country. In 1969, U.S. troops launched a series of aggressive operations against the revolutionary and progressive Laotian forces, making use of the puppet troops of the Vientiane regime.

The next year, the United States deployed against Laos all the bombers it had in South Vietnam, its Seventh Fleet aircraft, as well as its planes based in Thailand. In the first months of that year, these planes flew more than 250 sorties against Laos every day. On February 8, 1971, the United States announced a military invasion of Laos with the use of troops of the South Vietnamese region.

The U.S. government pursued two objectives with this operation. First, to cut the supply routes of the Vietnamese patriots passing through Laos to South Vietnam, and then to demonstrate the validity of its "Vietnamization" policy.

In spite of the powerful military force employed in the operation, the Lao People's Liberation Army (LPLA) shot down in the first few days of the invasion 65 U.S. helicopters, destroyed 40 tanks, and put out of action one battalion of paratroopers and five infantry companies. Every day the invading troops lost more of their positions and within 43 days were thrown back. On March 23, the supreme command of the LPLA issued a communique which summed up the success of the operation conducted against the foreign invasion.

This document noted that 15,400 enemy troops—including 200 American solidiers—had been annihilated and 1,000 others captured, among them several high-ranking officers. The enemy's material losses included 496 helicopters and planes destroyed or captured, 586 military vehicles, 143 pieces of heavy artillery, more than 5,000 weapons of different types, and large quantities of documents and military equipment.

Two years later, in February 1973, agreements were signed on a cease-fire in Laos and restoration of peace in the country. The proposal to begin negotiations, made by the Popular Front of Liberation, was based on the victorious position of the patriotic forces. Therefore, at the preliminary talks, the rightist faction accepted as a basis of the future negotiations the five points of the proposal, which made it quite clear that the United States must withdraw its forces and military equipment from the country.

The document, which was of great importance for the re-establishment of peace and national concord in Laos, also provided for the withdrawal within two months of all foreign military personnel and the formation of a provisional government of national unity and of a Political Consultative Council.

The Government of Laotian National Unity and the Political Council were set up in April 1974, headed by Princes Souvanna Phouma and Souphanouvong respectively. Both the coalition government—the third one in the country's history—and the Political Council were made up of an equal number of members representing the rightists and the Patriotic Front. The domestic and foreign policies of the new government were outlined in an 18-point political programme submitted to the Political Consultative Council by its chairman, Prince Souphanouvong. For the first time in its history, Laos had a political programme setting the economic and cultural line to be followed by the country.

As a result of the establishment of the coalition government, pro-American rightists still occupied their posts in public administration in 1975. However, in successive mass demonstrations held in all of the country's provinces and districts, the people called for the expulsion of those officials, who had collaborated with the United States and who sabotaged the decisions agreed upon by the coalition government.

On August 24, 1975, the government and the Patritotic Front of Laos announced that the people's revolutionary administration was already established throughout the territory of Laos. A month later, another statement announced the holding of general elections to form a National Assembly and a new government.

On December 2, 1975, King Savan Vatthana resigned and the monarchy was abolished.

The country, which had been a kingdom for six centuries, became the Lao People's Democratic Republic, led by the People's Revolutionary Party whose General Secretary, Kaysone Phomvihane, took the office of Prime Minister. Prince Souphanouvong, a member of the Party's Political Bureau, was elected President.

The revolutionary government immediately proclaimed its adherence to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, its solidarity with the socialist and progressive movement on the basis of the principles of proletarian internationalism, as well as its intention to develop friendly relations with all countries on the basis of respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, peaceful co-existence and mutual benefit.

The new Laotian government has devoted considerable resources to extending medical and public health services even to the remotest corners of the country and the same intensive aid is being given to education. In 1976, a national campaign was launched against diphtheria and other contagious diseases. In the same year, the people's power was consolidated at all levels of government and, according to official figures, remarkable economic progress has been scored.

In March 1977, the Laotian government crushed a reactionary plot and arrested former King Savan Vatthana, his son Vong Savan, and other members of the former royal house for their complicity in the conspiracy which was led by Soupphanta Rangsy, the ex-Governor of the Royal Palace.

The putschists had provoked disorder in different parts of the country, particularly in Luang Prabang, some 240 kilometres north of the capital of Vientiane where, too, a group of counter-revolutionaries had attacked the population. The plotters tried to restore the monarchy and liquidate the revolutionary government.

On February 23, 1979, the Patriotic Front of Laos changed its name to the Front for the Reconstruction of the Motherland (Neo Lao Xang Sat) which is putting into effect a seven-point programme concentrating on national defence, expansion of economic production and an international policy of solidarity.

In September of that year, Prime Minister Kaysone Phomvihane publicly denounced Chinese subversion. Because of its fraternal relations with Vietnam, Laos had to face for quite some time an openly hostile policy from Peking.

The stepped-up Chinese aggressiveness towards Laos coincided with the armed invasion of Vietnam by Peking and is a part of the hegemonistic aspirations of China's leaders in South-east Asia. This hostility against Laos manifested by armed Chinese provocations along the frontier between the two countries is due to Vientiane's solidarity with Vietnam and poses a constant threat of Chinese military incursions into Laotian territory. Yet another feature of this policy is the Chinese support of the counter-revolutionary leaders Vang Pao and Kong Le.

In the middle of 1979, Laos requested the withdrawal of a group of Chinese military experts who were supposedly building a road in the north of the country, near the Lao-Chinese frontier, originally at the request of Vientiane, but who were, in fact, preparing the construction of a network of roads which would make possible a rapid Chinese access to Laos and Vietnam in case of war. The same group was preparing a system of trenches and firing posts for infantry, artillery and armoured units directed against Laos on Laotian territory.

Having lost its positions inside Laos, Peking put pressure on Thailand to take over the role of Vientiane's antagonist. On July 6, 1980, the Laotian government accused Bangkok of conducting systematically armed provocations and incursions along the Mekong River, the natural frontier between the two countries, in spite of earlier agreements concluded between the Laotian and Thai governments, aimed at safeguarding navigation on that important waterway.

On December 2, 1980, this situation forced the people of Laos to celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Constitution of the People's Democratic Republic of Laos under new slogans of consolidation of national defence.

Economy: Farming and forestry are the main sectors of the Laotian economy. Of the country's total area, only 8% is suitable for cultivation and 60% is covered with forests from which 3,154,000 cu.m of timber was obtained in 1973. The two sectors of the national economy employ 78% of the economically active population which is estimated at 1,600,000 persons.

The main agricultural product is rice whose output rose from 700,000 metric tons in 1977 to 870,000 tons in 1978, and 1,000,000 tons in 1979, in spite of the threat of war from China and the many natural calamities the country suffered with alternating periods of drought and floods.

Other agricultural products include maize, potatoes and soya beans, of which approximately 4,000 tons are produced, and garden and other vegetables for domestic consumption.

In June 1978, a large-scale movement for the formation of agricultural cooperatives came into being, which should gradually do away with the situation under which there exist at the same time socialist, private-owned and mixed enterprises.

In 1980, agricultural production in general rose by 2.4% compared with the 1975 level.

As early as 1977, the light and food-processing industries, and the production of maize, potatoes and peanuts went up 300% compared with the preceding year thanks to a correct economic policy, while a serious effort was made to mechanize the production of silk fibre.

The three-year plan for the period 1978-1980 provided for doubling the area used for growing fruit and industrial crops.

The number of cattle was estimated at 518,000 in 1977, when the country had 1,234 buffaloes and 1,512,000 pigs. In 1977, too, Laos produced 516,000 metric tons of tin concentrate, which is its primary export item together with timber and salt.

The primary industrial sector produces phosphorus, cement, spun cotton, soap, leather and other products. In January 1981, Premier Phomvihane underlined the achievements scored in the fields of forestry and its exploitation, in industry, capital construction, transport and other areas.

In 1979, there were 500 industrial plants throughout Laos, and electric power production rose from 214,000 kWh to 16,100,000 kWh with the inclusion in the power grid of the hydro-electric plant at Nam Ngun.

The gross national product of the Lao People's Democratic Republic exceeded 300,000,000 dollars in 1979.

The national currency is the kip whose rate of exchange is 400 per U.S. dollar.

In 1981, Laos announced the launching of its first five-year plan which covers the period until 1985 and is the product of a careful preliminary study of the country's possibilities by competent authorities. The plan calls for continued efforts in pursuit of the country's three revolutions—economic, cultural and defence—and for greater cooperation with the socialist countries and improvement in the living conditions of the population. This programme should produce great achievements even under the difficult climatic conditions of the country which suffers from droughts, floods and typhoons, as well as from the Sino-Thai aggression since it sets out as the principle targets the continued improvement of the economic structure and distribution of goods, and the formation of qualified cadres.

Laotion foreign trade is growing especially with the Soviet Union which established these relations on October 7, 1960, and other socialist and progressive countries which have been cooperating with Laos in the development of its national economy.

Laos has no railways and its transportation system is based mainly on the Mekong River and 1,300 km of roads. There is no television, but the country has a chain of radio stations and two daily newspapers with national distribution.

Government: The government structure includes 12 ministries, two committees (for planning and for ethnic groups), the National Bank, and the Prime Minister's Office.

Kaysone Phomvihane was appointed Prime Minister of the new government and on Souphanouvong's proposal the ex-Premier Souvanna Phouma assumed the duties of Chief Adviser to the Government.

On December 6, 1975, Phomvihane and Souvanna Phouma signed documents providing for the transfer of power and thereby the Lao People's Democratic Republic was established officially.

After the more than quarter of a century of foreign intervention, the young nation inherited many economic and social problems which require at the present the concentration of its efforts on the creation of the technological and material foundations for the construction of a socialist society.

Having been recently established, the new republic, according to its Prime Minister Kaysone Phomvihane, needs a foreign policy of independence, peace, friendship and non-alignment.

At the National Congress of People's Representatives, Prince Souphanouvong was elected President of the Republic and of the Supreme People's Council.

Organizations: The leading force in Laotian society is the Lao People's Revolutionary Party, which has a Marxist-Leninist orientation and was founded on March 22, 1955.

There are also the Front for the Reconstruction of the Motherland (Neo Lao Xang Sat), which had the name of the Patriotic Front of the Lao People's Democratic Republic until February 23, 1979, the Patriotic Youth, the Association of Patriotic Women and the trade unions.

Revolutionary militia units are being developed and strengthened throughout the country.

Armed forces: Before the signing of the 1973 cease-fire agreements, there were three armies in the country—the Lao People's Army, the Royal Army and the neutralist troops. After the formation of the coalition government and the proclamation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, the armed forces began to undergo a process of reorganization in conformity with the new reality prevailing in the country, and this process still continues.

The five-year plan for the period 1981-1985, as reported by Prime Minister Kaysone Phomvihane to a meeting of the Supreme People's Council in January 1981, provides for a strengthening of national defence in order to frustrate hostile aggressions.

Education, culture and sports: In the 1960s and 1970s, the Lao People's Army promoted education in the liberated areas and their activity grew into a large-scale movement; education gradually expanded at all levels, including adult education.

On September 14, 1975, the Revolutionary Committees announced a ten-point programme of political, economic, cultural and social development, giving an impetus to the movement to combat illiteracy which under the French colonial regime stood at 95%. The programme also provided for improvement of the curriculum in the schools.

On September 1, 1979, the efforts in this direction were redoubled with the formation of a National Commission for Literacy and Cultural Advancement, whose importance was underlined by the appointment of Souphanouvong as its chairman and of the Minister of Culture, Phoumi Vonvichit, as its vice-chairman.

The country's leadership promotes the cultural traditions of the Lao people.

In 1978, 2,000,000 people learned to read and write, and instruction at schools began to be given in the native language, replacing French which had been imposed on the country in the colonial times.

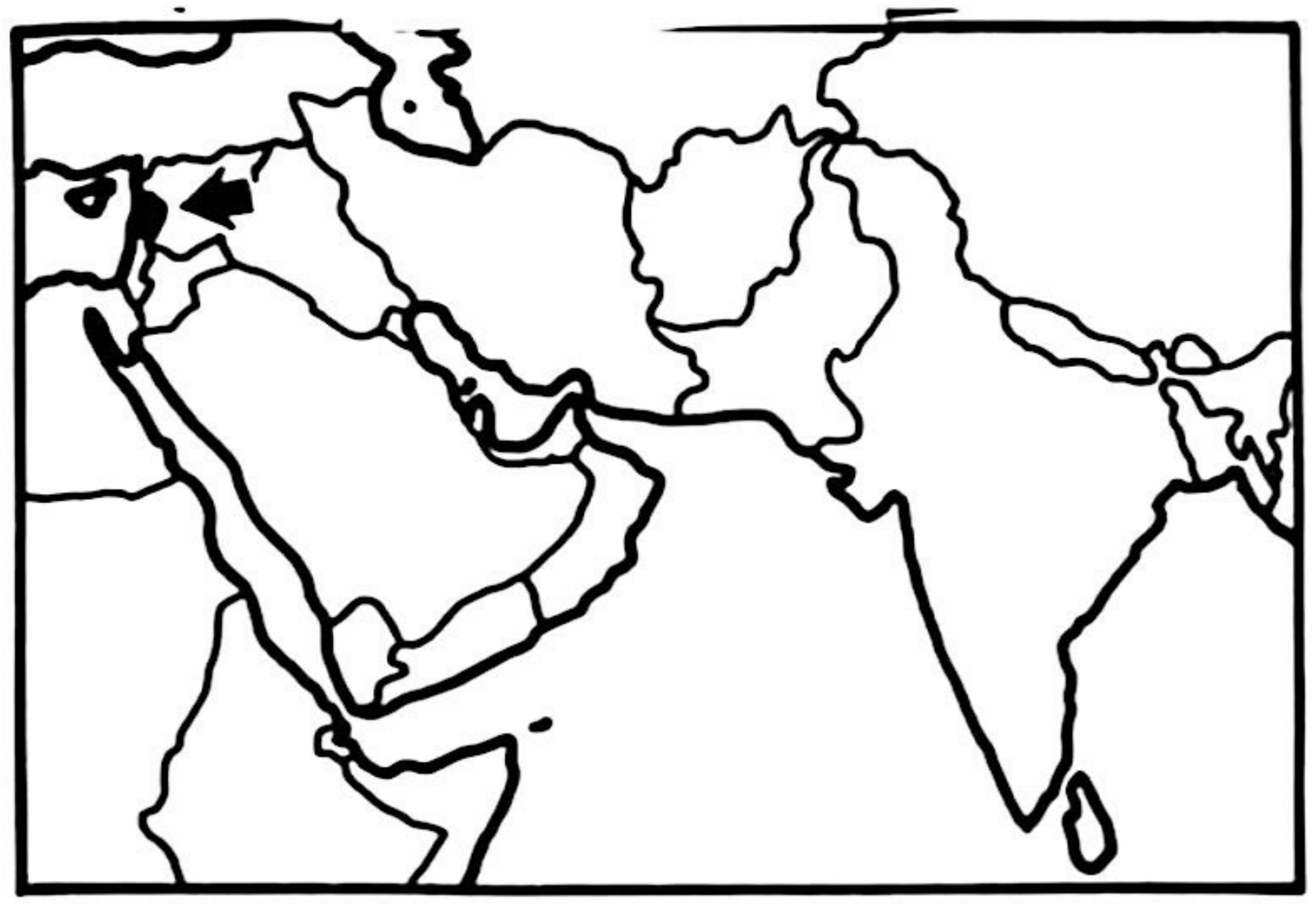
There are some 260,000 pupils, close to 7,500 teachers and professors, and more than 2,060 educational institutions, including a university.

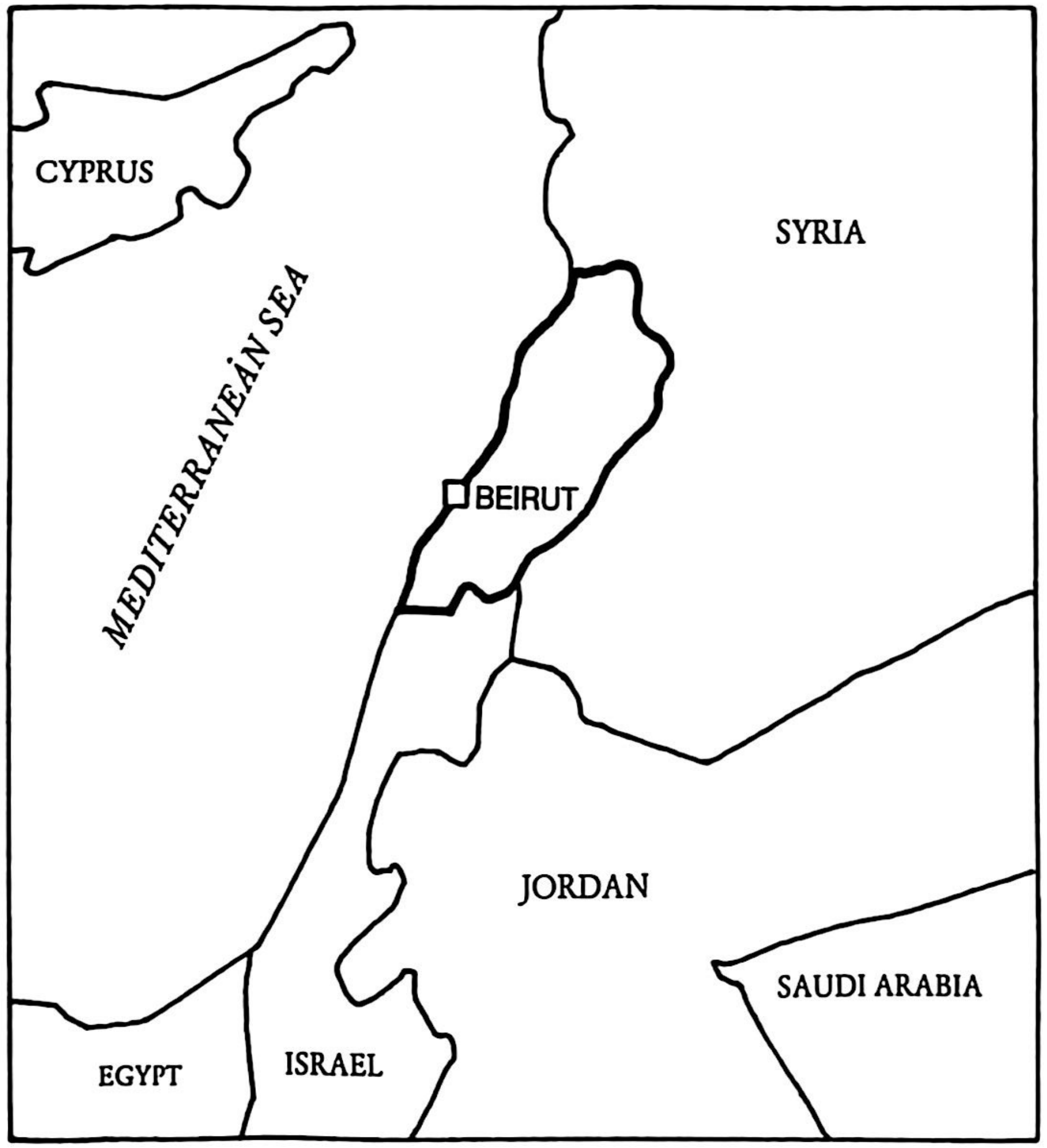
Public health: In 1979, Laos had 156 doctors—compared with 43 four years earlier--15 dentists, 250 paramedics, some 1,500 nursing personnel, 12 pharmacists, and 350 other public health workers.

There are some 40 hospitals in a network covering all provinces, health centres in the villages, and medical centres of a nationwide character. The hospital capacity is roughly 3,500 beds. New achievements in this field have been scored under the three-year plan which ended in 1980.

Religion: Buddhism is the dominant creed, but there is freedom of religion.

LEBANON




CYPRUS
SYRIA
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
BEIRUT
JORDAN
SAUDI ARABIA
EGYPT
ISRAEL

Official name: Republic of Lebanon.
Area: 10,400 sq.km.
Borders: In the north and east Lebanon borders on Syria, in the south on Israel, and in the west on the Mediterranean Sea.
Population: 3,090,000 according to a 1979 United Nations estimate. The annual rate of population growth in the period 1977-1978 was 2.38%. 61% of the population live in urban areas.
Capital: Beirut (850,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Tripoli, Saida, Zahle and Tyre.
Languages: The official language is Arabic; French and English are also spoken.
Public holiday: November 22, National Independence Day (1943).
Geography: Lebanon consists of a narrow belt of land on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and on the Asian continent. There are four main geographical regions: the coast, which is articulated and has numerous bays, in which the principal towns are located; the Lebanon Mountains which run through Lebanese territory from the north to the south at an average height of 2,200 m; the Bekaa Valley east of the mountains, which is 10 to 15 km wide and separates the Lebanon Mts. from the Anti-Lebanon range, rising in the northeast of the country and running along the border with Syria, in whose southern part rises Mt. Hermon to more than 2,800 m above sea level. The mountainous surface of the country provides a natural system of irrigation consisting of more than 15 rivers, the most important of which is the Litani, flowing from the Baalbek Valley to the south for more than 400 km.

The climate is basically Mediterranean with marked variations between the aforementioned geographical regions. Winters are short and rainy, while relative humidity is high on the coast during the summer months.

Brief history: The territory today occupied by Lebanon had been in the course of centuries the crossroads of different cultures of Oriental and European origin, which fought for the possession of this important stretch of the Mediterranean coast.

The Phoenicians, a Semitic people, who had settled along the Lebanese coast around the 14th century B.C., are considered to be the most ancient ancestors of the Lebanese, preceded only by the Hittite and Aramaean kingdoms of Antiquity.

It was the Phoenicians who founded, among other places, the ports of Byblos, Tyre and Sidon, which spurred intensive trade organized by this people characterized by a commercial and marine tradition.

Achaeological discoveries in Byblos—today a small community called Jubail, in the north of the country—document the existence of a period of flourishing trade with Egypt earlier than the wealth the cities of Tyre and Sidon left to posterity as the supreme manifestation of the Phoenician civilization. It was Byblos, known to the Egyptians as the Land of the Gods, where the Phoenician script was created as the forerunner of the modern-day alphabet and as an achievement of immense importance for human civilization.

Sidon, today's Saida, as it was named by the Arabs in the period of Islamic expansion, replaced Byblos as the centre of the Phoenician realm between 1300 and 1200 B.C.

The history of Tyre, the most important of the Phoenician cities, coincides with the history of the most brilliant period of this culture which extended from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean to Cyprus and Rhodes, circumnavigated Africa according to Herodotus, and founded Carthage.

The Assyrians, whose kingdom covered the central part of the Tigris basin, dominated the Lebanese coast between 867 and 605 B.C., when their rule was replaced by that of Babylon from 605 to 538 B.C., the period in which occurred the famous 13-year siege of Tyre by the armies of Nebuchadnezzar. Later, the Mediterranean coast was seized by the Persian Empire which permitted the Phoenician cities to enjoy a period of relative stability. The Macedonian conquest in 333 B.C. covered all of the Phoenician coast with the exception of Tyre, which Alexander the Great had to besiege for seven months. After he had finally conquered the city, he had 8,000 of its inhabitants killed and sold 30,000 others as slaves. In successive wars, the domain of the Phoenician cities fell to the Egyptians, Syrians and other peoples until the Roman Empire consolidated its hold of this area. The Roman occupation, launched in the year 64 B.C., restored the role of a crossroads, which present-day Lebanon used to play earlier. In Baalbek, the Romans built majestic temples whose ruins are today one of the country's greatest cultural attractions. The fall of Rome was followed by 300 years of the Byzantine Empire, during which the Christian cult expanded in this area.

The Islamic expansion reached the country in 636, when all of Syria was conquered by Caliph Omar. Arabization of the country followed, giving the Lebanon its character to this day, although the Christians, too, unified around the followers of St. Maro, a monotheistic sect, about the second half of the 7th century.

Another important religious community of today, the Druzes, was formed in the 11th century in the central part of the country, which rises to considerable heights and is known among the Europeans as "the Mountain of the Druzes".

The Lebanese coast, in particular the cities of Tripoli, Sidon (Saida) and Beirut, were coveted by the Crusaders, who conquered them in 1109 and 1110, and used them as their bases for their incursions towards the east until their expulsion by the Mamelukes. Meanwhile, the power of the Ottoman Turks, spurred by the fall of Constantinople in 1453, was consolidated in 1516 with the Mameluke defeat at Aleppo, whereby present-day Syria—which included Lebanese territory—became a part of the Ottoman world for the next four centuries.

In 1860, slaughter of Christians by the Druzes gave cause to Napoleon III for invading the area, and within a year his armies occupied Beirut. From 1864 to 1914, an organic statute which followed the French occupation stipulated that the area would be governed by a Christian approved by the European powers.

In April 1920, the League of Nations conference in San Remo agreed to give France a mandate over Syria and Lebanon. In 1926, under French domination, a separate state was proclaimed for Lebanon with a constitution of the western type, which preserved in most respects the separation between the different religious communities that persists to this day.

During World War II, the French authorities in Lebanon aligned themselves with the Vichy regime, thereby provoking a landing by British and Free French troops in June 1941. Following a promise of independence, the local political forces pressed for elections. In 1943, Bechara al-Khuri was appointed President. Riadh Solh, a Sunni Moslem, assumed the post of Premier under a tacit agreement on division of powers, based on the proportion of the respective religious communities, known as the National Pact; this Pact governs to this day the political equilibrium in the country.

The first sovereign Lebanese government amended the Constitution, eliminating all formal ties with France, which in spite of the proclamation of independence tried to continue her hegemony. After a political crisis provoked by the imprisonment of President Khuri by the French—a move foiled by the nationalist forces—the Lebanese leader was freed on November 22 1943.

In March 1949, following turbulent political conflicts with the opposition parties about problems of public administration, Bechara al-Khuri was sworn in for his second presidential term. Three years later, Camille Chamoun was appointed under strong popular pressure as the second constitutional President of the country. His government was characterized by growing political difference between Arab national sentiments and pro-Western factions. In 1956, his vacillating position on the Egyptian decision to nationalize the Suez Canal intensified the anti-government mood among the broad Moslem masses of the population.

The year 1958 was an important milestone in the history of Lebanese politics. The Chamoun government revealed its anti-national character by inviting the intervention of United States armed forces under the impact of the crisis which had swept the Baghdad Pact following the overthrow of the Iraqi monarchy and of growing popular discontent.

Under the cover of a sizable contingent of the U.S. Sixth Fleet, 15,000 U.S. Marines occupied Lebanon from August to October 1958.

General Fouad Chehab, the Army commander, assumed power in 1958 and held it in a conciliatory mood until 1964, when he was succeded by Charles Helou. It was under the Helou government, that the Intra Bank, Lebanon's major banking institution, went bankrupt, causing serious repercussions in the national economy. Another serious impact, this time in Lebanese political life, was produced by the fourth Arab-Israeli war in 1967. In that period contradictions sharpened between the pro-Western Lebanese politicians and the Palestinian refugees, which resulted in violent clashes. The so-called Cairo Agreements have governed since then the relations between the Lebanese state and the Palestinian resistance movement based on its territory.

In the spring of 1970, Sulaiman Franjiya, a politician from the north of the country, became the fifth Lebanese President since independence. The Franjiya government passed through many deep crises, including the crisis provoked by new attacks against the Palestinians in 1973 by rightist groups. A number of cabinets succeeded one another rapidly and in May 1975, a military government was resorted to for the first time, but it was overthrown less than 70 hours after its appointment under the impact of a general strike called by the progressive parties.

Between 1970 and 1975, the number of Palestinians in Lebanon passed the 300,000 mark, a fact which directly ties the country to the key problem of the region, i.e, the conflict with Israel.

From 1973 on, Israel began attacking the southern parts of Lebanon in reprisal for Palestinian guerilla raids on the Zionist state.

This produced a delicate situation in that part of the country, since the central authorities ceased to exercise their power in the area and the economy, mostly agrarian in character, was paralyzed due to the constant Israeli raids against the local peasants.

The south had always been the economically most retarded part of the country, where a Moslem majority was engaged in farming. It was precisely there where most of the Palestinians who had immigrated to Lebanon since 1948 had settled, and over the years the relationship between the two communities had grown closer.

The Israeli aggressions were designed from the very beginning to destroy this relationship and to upset the situation there so that the rightist groups could seize power in the south of Lebanon, because this would provide a guarantee against the Palestinian attacks by depriving the Palestinians of their supply bases.

Just as the progressive forces opposed the planned collusion between the Lebanese rightists and the Israelis, the latter stepped up their anti-Lebanese and anti-Palestinian activities in the country, which led to the assassination in Beirut of a number of important resistance leaders by terrorists, in addition to other acts of intervention and attacks on Lebanese sovereignty.

In March 1975, the National Front (made up of the National and Phalangist Parties) launched armed attacks against the progressive movement allied with the Palestinian resistance.

A bus carrying men, women and children to the Tal Al Zatar camp was machine-gunned by a Phalangist commando on April 13, as it passed through a Maronite Christian quarter of Beirut. This unprovoked attack, in which 31 persons were killed, sparked off civil war.

Armed clashes spread to the whole country over a period of 16 months with a disastrous loss of human life and material values. The civil war was fomented by Israel through the rightists with the objective of breaking up the progressive movement and the Palestinian resistance.

During this conflict, the government's action was marked by impotence produced by pressure of the paramilitary units of the extreme right. Rent by the religious differences which have always burdened the life of the country, the Lebanese state demonstrated its inability to ensure order in the country, and most of the government institutions, including the army, collapsed in the chaos produced by the civil war.

According to official but still not final statistics, the two years of civil war caused the death of more than 50,000 people, while additional thousands were wounded and mutilated, and disastrous losses were caused to the national economy. Some 80 villages were levelled to the ground, more than 800,000 people from a population of just over three million emigrated, approximately half of the economically active population lost their jobs as a result of the conflict, and some 25,000 workers are estimated to have been killed.

Government estimates place the losses directly caused by the civil war at some 2,500 million dollars, while approximately the same sum represents the indirect damage caused to the Lebanese economy due to the loss of the country's position as a privileged financial centre of the Middle East.

The objectives of the Lebanese extreme right and Israel to provoke and encourage a profound split between the Lebanese and the Palestinians failed. In spite of the religious character which they wanted to give the conflict, its actual development clearly demonstrated its political nature. At the same time, the alliance between the Palestinian resistance movement and the local progressive forces, whose joint destruction had been the aim of the rightist alliance—strengthened in the course of the war by other small parties and paramilitary gangs, as well as by some religious ideologists—was re-affirmed.

In the midst of this tense situation, Suleiman Franjiya turned over his authority on September 22, 1976, to Elias Sarkis, who had been elected by parliament in a tight contest with the other presidential aspirant, Raymond Edde.

After many attempts at negotiation and numerous broken cease-fire agreements, the Arab League decided at its urgent session held on June 10, 1976, to establish an Arab Deterrent Force (ADF), made up of military contingents from its member-countries, which would intervene in Lebanon and stop the civil war.

Some months later, these units, known as the "Green Berets" arrived in Lebanon. They consisted of 30,000 troops, mostly Syrian, which were placed under the command of the Lebanese President, Elias Sarkis.

The National Liberal and the Phalangist Parties rejected the peace-keeping efforts of the "Green Berets" by stepping up their military activities.

At the beginning of 1977, the Lebanese civil war ended, but the situation in the country remained most precarious. To this day, the presence of the Syrian contingent of the ADF has ensured peace in different parts of the country, although this is being constantly threatened by new outbursts of violence. After the failure of the objectives sought by the extreme right, their intentions became obvious, to achieve a partition of the country, which, in fact, continues to be divided into zones of religious influence in spite of the central government's endeavour to assert its authority over the whole country.

On March 15, 1978, a new crisis of nationwide magnitude broke out when more than 30,000 Israeli troops invaded the southern parts of Lebanon.

The aggression, carried out by combined air, naval and ground forces, caused a massive exodous of the population of southern Lebanon to the north. It is estimated that in the first few days of the bitter fighting some 200,000 families fled to the capital, Beirut, and other more secure communities.

The invading forces occupied one fifth of Lebanese territory, indiscriminately massacring the Lebanese and Palestinian population. Many battles were fought between the invaders and the combined forces of the Lebanese National Movement and the Palestinian resistance.

The U.N. Security Council met in urgent session on April 20, and passed a resolution condemning Israel for its military intervention in Lebanon and demanding the immediate withdrawal of its forces without any preliminary conditions. It also decided to set up a United Nations peace-keeping force which would re-establish order in Lebanon. The "Blue Berets" of this force, known as UNIFIL, would take the positions abandoned by Israel during its withdrawal. However, when the Israeli government decided in May 1978 to withdraw its troops step by step from Lebanon, it turned over the Israeli positions to the Phalangist militia, which it had installed in the communities it controlled, ignoring the authority of the U.N. peace-keeping force. This produced a resolute protest from the U.N. Secretary General, Kurt Waldheim. The Israeli withdrawal was completed on June 10, under the previously announced conditons.

A strip of land, 800 sq.km in area, was left in the south of Lebanon, under the control of rightist militias firmly entrenched with Israel's help and commanded by a deserter from the regular Lebanese army, Saad Haddad. He and his militias in fact provide to Israel added protection against the activities of the Palestine resistance movement. Haddad's militias at the same time constantly harass the UNIFIL forces and defy the authority of the government in Beirut with the tacit consent of the rightist groups, such as the Phalangist Party.

The establishment of this barrier under its control along the southern frontier of Lebanon realized the old Zionist aspirations which had been obvious since the first Arab-Israeli war, and replaced the policy of a so-called "good frontier", which Israel had launched in 1976 in the midst of the Lebanese conflict, together with attempts to win supporters for this policy in Lebanon, as a form of securing its presence beyond the lines set by the 1948 armistice agreement.

The 1978 Israeli invasion of the southern parts of Lebanon spurred the continuation of the tension created by the civil war and further sharpened the existing economic crisis. According to official figures, the result of the massive Israeli aggression included 250,000 permanently displaced persons, 10,000 destroyed homes, 25,000 partially destroyed houses, 10,810 orphans, 36,000 children left without school, and 75,000 families requiring social assistance, in addition to other losses and detrimental consequences.

The unstable situation in Lebanon further deteriorated after June 1978, when bloody clashes took place between the rightist groups.

Only three days after the Israeli withdrawal, Phalangist groups staged an attack against the followers of former President Franjiya. The ex-President's son was murdered together with his wife and daughter in his native town of Zghorta, some 200 km north of Beirut, and thirty additional Franjiya followers were killed with him in a large-scale armed clash.

The difference between the followers of the ex-President and the Lebanese Phalange grew out of the acceptance by Suleiman Franjiya of the entry of Syrian troops into Lebanon in order to join the Arab League Deterrent Force.

The Lebanese Phalange, which had emerged from the civil war as the main military force of the extreme right, also attacked its former ally, Camille Chamoun's National Liberal Party which was weakened in the conflict and with which it competed for the control of the Christian quarters of Beirut and the Christian areas in the vicinity of the capital.

Although both religious parties had earlier staged joint attacks against the Arab Deterrent Force, in October 1980, a Phalangist offensive against the National Liberal Party destroyed for all practical purposes its power base and annihilated its military forces, thus leaving the Phalange the only rightist party in effective control in the area of the capital city.

In the governmental sphere, the principal forces had dedicated themselves since the end of the civil war to the reconstruction of the country and the national army. Between 1976 and 1980, the government was headed by Selim El Hoss, who as the Premier of two successive cabinets established a record of tenure among the country's Prime Ministers. Following its institution, the Hoss cabinet was described as a government of "technocrats" because of its make-up which did not include any members of Lebanon's traditional political configurations. Hampered by constant economic, political and military crises, Hoss finally resigned in June 1980. President Sarkis then entrusted the veteran politician Takieddin Solh with the formation of a new cabinet which was to have represented the different political forces in the country. Solh failed in his attempts after 20 days of negotiations, and was replaced by Shafiq Al Wazzan, who assumed the Premier's office in October 1980 with similar tasks to those which had faced the preceding cabinet—national reconstruction, strengthening of the central authority, and a final reorganization of the armed forces.

Economy: In the absence of government statistics on the make-up of the gross national product before the civil war, various private institutions, primarily American, provide figures on Lebanese finances in that period. In 1973, trade and services are reported as the main sources of revenue, together accounting for 55.3% of the GNP. In the same year, industry accounted for 14.6% and agriculture for 9.5% of the total GNP.

An analysis of the figures for the past 20 years shows a growth in importance of the tertiary sector as regards its share of the GNP (62.7% against 71.7% in 1973), while in the same period the share of agriculture had dropped from 19.5% to 9.5%. Industry, to which urban development is linked, has maintained a stable share.

There are no data available on Lebanon's GNP—not even estimates—since 1974, as a result of the civil war which erupted the following year.

The government's efforts in the economic sphere are centred on national reconstruction. A Reconstruction and Development Council was established in 1977 with the objective of promoting investments which would help restore the economy seriously damaged and paralyzed by the conflict. However, the Council's activity has produced little effect in view of the continued absence of political and social stability. In 1978, for example, the Israeli invasion interrupted the realization of all of the government's reconstruction plans. They envisage an investment of 7,300 million dollars over a period of five years, which the government would use to cover a part of the costs of reconstruction of housing facilities (65,000 houses had been completely or partly destroyed during the conflict), or roads, the old commercial centre of Beirut, its port and airport, as well as of other priority projects.

Two thirds of the reconstruction plan are to be financed proportionately by the Arab countries, although this financing is obviously dependent on Lebanon's internal situation.

Before the civil war, Lebanon and especially its capital Beirut played the key role in commercial and financial transactions in the Middle East, and for this reason the importance of banking activities there seemed at first sight disproportionate to the production and commerce of Lebanon proper.

In 1945, there were only seven banks of some significance active in the country, while in 1964, before the notorious crash of the Intra-Bank, their number was 94. After the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and until 1975, some 77 banks operated in Lebanon. In June 1974, their deposits were estimated at 4,400,000,000 dollars.

During the war some 26 banks were destroyed and damaged, and yet this sector, still a key factor in the Lebanese economy, has scored perhaps the greatest recovery since the conflict. In 1978, the number of operating banks was 81, 75 of them being of a commercial character and six being credit institutions.

In 1975, industrial production turned out mainly foodstuffs and textiles (44% of the total industrial output), furniture and other wood products (29%), cement, ceramics and pharmaceutical products (20%). The industrial sector was most seriously affected by the conflict. The Beirut Chamber of Commerce estimates that approximately one fifth of the fixed industrial assets was destroyed in the course of the civil war. An official report, issued in 1978, announced the establishment of 64 new industrial enterprises with a total capital of 240 million Lebanese pounds. The year before, industrial output stood at 65% of the 1974 level.

Agriculture held a secondary position in the Lebanese economy until 1975. After the war it underwent a relatively more rapid recovery than the other economic sectors. Only one fifth of the country's area is arable land. The most fertile parts are the coastal zone and the valley of the Litani River. In 1978, 30% of the 3,900 cultivated hectares of land were taken up by orchards, 19% by cereals, and 10% by vegetables. The main agricultural products include citrus fruit, apples, bananas, peaches, pears, olives, grapes, wine, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, and melons, all mostly for export. The main cereal produced is wheat, although barley is also grown. Sugar production has dropped to one quarter of the volume produced in 1975.

It is estimated that the Israeli invasion of the southern part of Lebanon in 1978 caused an economic loss of 30 million dollars, mainly in the production of citrus fruit and tobacco.

Two important sources of state revenue in Lebanon are the two oil pipeline terminals—one in Tripoli in the north, which supplies petroleum from the Kirkuk fields in Iraq, the other one at Zahrani, which is the end of Tapline. This terminal, in the vicinity of Saida, is also adjoined by an important refinery processing petroleum pumped there from Saudi Arabia.

The refinery in Tripoli has a daily processing capacity of 30,000 barrels of petroleum and the Zahrani refinery can process 50,000 barrels a day. Between 1975 and 1977, both refineries had to suspend their operation. In 1978, Tripoli refined 6.9 million barrels and Zahrani 5.2 million. which represents approximately 75% of the total capacity of the two installations.

Although Lebanon has no oil-producing facilities, the presence of petroleum on its territory was announced in 1974, but its commercial exploitation was interrupted by the war. In 1979, off-shore petroleum deposits were discovered, the possibility of their exploitation is currently being studied.

In the 1970s, tourism was one of Lebanon's principal sources of income. In 1973, more than 225 million dollars were earned from tourist traffic, and in 1975, earnings from tourism accounted for 19% of the country's gross national product. Approximately 1,050,000 tourists visit the country annually, exclusive of temporary Arab immigration. However, in recent years tourism has dropped to roughly 20% of its earlier volume.

Foreign capital investments are common in almost all the sectors of the national economy. The policy of the Lebanese state in this respect is to facilitate such investments through a free money market and banking legislation which offers ample opportunities to investors. There are no exact figures or estimates available on the different forms of foreign investments, although it is known that they are considerable in the transportation and petroleum refining sectors, in cement production, the service industry, the chemical industry, the manufacture of building materials, the food industry, and paper production. Currently, foreign investments seem to be paralyzed for all practical purposes. Nevertheless, Lebanon's foreign exchange reserves amount to 2,016 million dollars, and the exchange rate of the Lebanese pound, which has been freely convertible since 1952, was 3.26 per U.S. dollar in 1980.

In the area of foreign trade, Lebanon's balance of trade in 1979 showed a deficit of 3,170 million Lebanese pounds, the result of a trend in which imports exceed exports. Between 1964 and 1974, the total value of imports had grown at an annual rate of 13%.

In 1974, imports amounted to 4,200 million Lebanese pounds, dropped to 1,800 million in 1976, and rose again to 4,500 million in 1977. In 1978, the total value of imports was 5,100 million Lebanese pounds. 57% of the imports came from Italy, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, Great Britain and Japan.

The conflict between 1975 and 1977 also greatly reduced the level of Lebanese exports. In 1977, these exports amounted to 2,365 million Lebanese pounds, i.e. 68% of the 1974 level. The next year there was another drop—of 18%—due to the closure of the port in Beirut. The principal export items are food products, building materials, chemicals, textiles, paper and cartons, most of them going to other Arab countries, including Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, and Kuwait.

Lebanon has concluded bilateral economic agreements with the Soviet Union and other member-countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. It has a special agreement with Syria on the transit of goods to that country and then to Iraq, Jordan, and the Gulf states.

Lebanon's transportation and communications system, too, has been seriously affected by the civil war. The port of Beirut, one of the most important in the Middle East, had 95% of its capacity destroyed, and 2,000 million Lebanese pounds worth of merchandise stored there was destroyed or looted. In 1978, the port handled 1.6 million tons of cargo, which is 39% of the 1974 volume. Today, the transit traffic amounts only to 15% of the volume it had in 1974.

Yet another effect of the conflict is the high inflation rate Lebanon's economy is facing. The cost of living index rose by 348.7 points between 1974 and 1975, and in 1980 it again rose by 25% compared with the previous year.

The last, 1980, national budget amounted to 4,390 million Lebanese pounds, out of which 980 million were earmarked for military expenditure.

Government: The entire state apparatus is based on a denominational constitution—perhaps the only one in the modern world—and the National Pact which provides for a permanent division of the spheres of power.

The Executive power is exercised by the President of the Republic, elected for a term of six years and advised by a cabinet.

The Council of Ministers is accountable to the National Assembly, which has 99 members, of whom 53 must be of the Christian faith.

The deputies are elected by universal suffrage but on the basis of contingents of fixed confessional groups, as provided for by the constitution.

The National Pact stipulates that the President must be a member of the Christian

Maronite community and the Prime Minister a member of the Moslem (Sunni) community.
Armed forces: The size of the Lebanese army was considerably increased from the second half of 1960. Established in 1958, the Lebanese armed forces had approximately 16,000 men, including the gendarmerie stationed mostly in the capital. 1,000 of these men served in the air force and 300 in the navy. When civil war broke out in 1975, the Lebanese armed forces split along the political lines then in existence.

Military expenditures before the civil war, in 1975, amounted to 136 million dollars, which represented one quarter of the national budget.

The government of President Sarkis tried in 1980 to reconstruct the Lebanese army, but the rightists obstructed this move by attempting to give the armed forces the same confessional character they had before and to keep control of the top command posts.

The country's lack of defence capacity is one of the main points of the local political conflict, since the constant Israeli aggression calls for an increased military potential of the country which is practically helpless against attack from abroad, as the Israeli military invasions have demonstrated on a number of occasions.

Organizations: The structure of Lebanon's political parties combines class interest with the deeply rooted religious divisions of the country, where certain political groupings represent specific religious or ethnic groups, which is due not only to their multiplicity in the nation, but also to the fact that the entire state apparatus is based on a confessional constitution.

The main political parties include the National Bloc Party founded in 1943 by Emile Edde, who was of Christian Maronite origin, and led today by his son, Raymond Edde.

The Phalangist Party (Kataeb) is the representative of the extreme right and is also made up of Maronites. It is one of the largest parties in the country and has gained a reputation for its military power of admittedly more than 10,000 armed men organized in militia.

Still another Maronite group is the right-wing National Liberal Party which was founded by ex-President Camille Chamoun.

Another of the major Lebanese political parties, the Popular Syrian Party, emerged as an expression of trends towards unification with the neighbouring country, which have existed throughout Lebanese history. In 1949, Kamal Jumblatt, the leader of the Druze community, founded the Socialist Progressive Party, which holds a firm position of support of the Palestinian resistance movement and of protection of the national political balance. The Socialist Progressive Party is one of the forces most deeply entrenched among the Lebanese people.

The Communist Party was established in 1924. Although outlawed for more than 20 years (1948-1970), it has great influence in trade union and student organizations, and is actively involved in the complexity of local politics.

The National Progressive Movement of Lebanon, which is made up of a number of left-wing political organizations, carries great weight in the country. The Central Political Council of the Movement has as its president Walid Jumblatt, who succeeded his father Kamal, assassinated by a rightist group in March 1977.

The movement includes the Socialist Progressive Party, the Communist Party of Lebanon, the Organization of Communist Action of Lebanon, the Lebanese Baath Party, the Independent Nasserite Movement (Moraibitun), the Arab Socialist Union, and various other organizations.

The right-wing Lebanese Front is formed by the Lebanese Phalange Party (Kataeb) of Pierre Gemayel and the National Liberal Party of Camille Chamoun, but is weakened by internal divisions.

The largest of the Lebanese workers' organizations is the General Workers' Union which associates numerous trade union groups from different sectors of the national economy. One of the groups associated in the country's central trade union organization, the National Union of Workers' and Employees' Trade Unions, consisting of politically progressive unions, has played an important role in the workers' struggle of recent years.
Education and sports: The Lebanese nation may be viewed as a positive exception in the Arab world as regards educational matters.

Official figures indicate that illiteracy amounts only to 20%, although in areas distant from the capital and, in particular, in the mountains, it is twice as high according to the same sources.

According to the latest available data on education, there were 2,561 primary and secondary schools in 1973 with an enrollment of more than half a million pupils, of whom more than 350,000 attended private schools.

In 1978, there were five universities in Beirut, some of them ranking among the most important in the Middle East; they had a total of 47,936 students and 1,623 teachers.

The sport most frequently practiced in Lebanon is football.

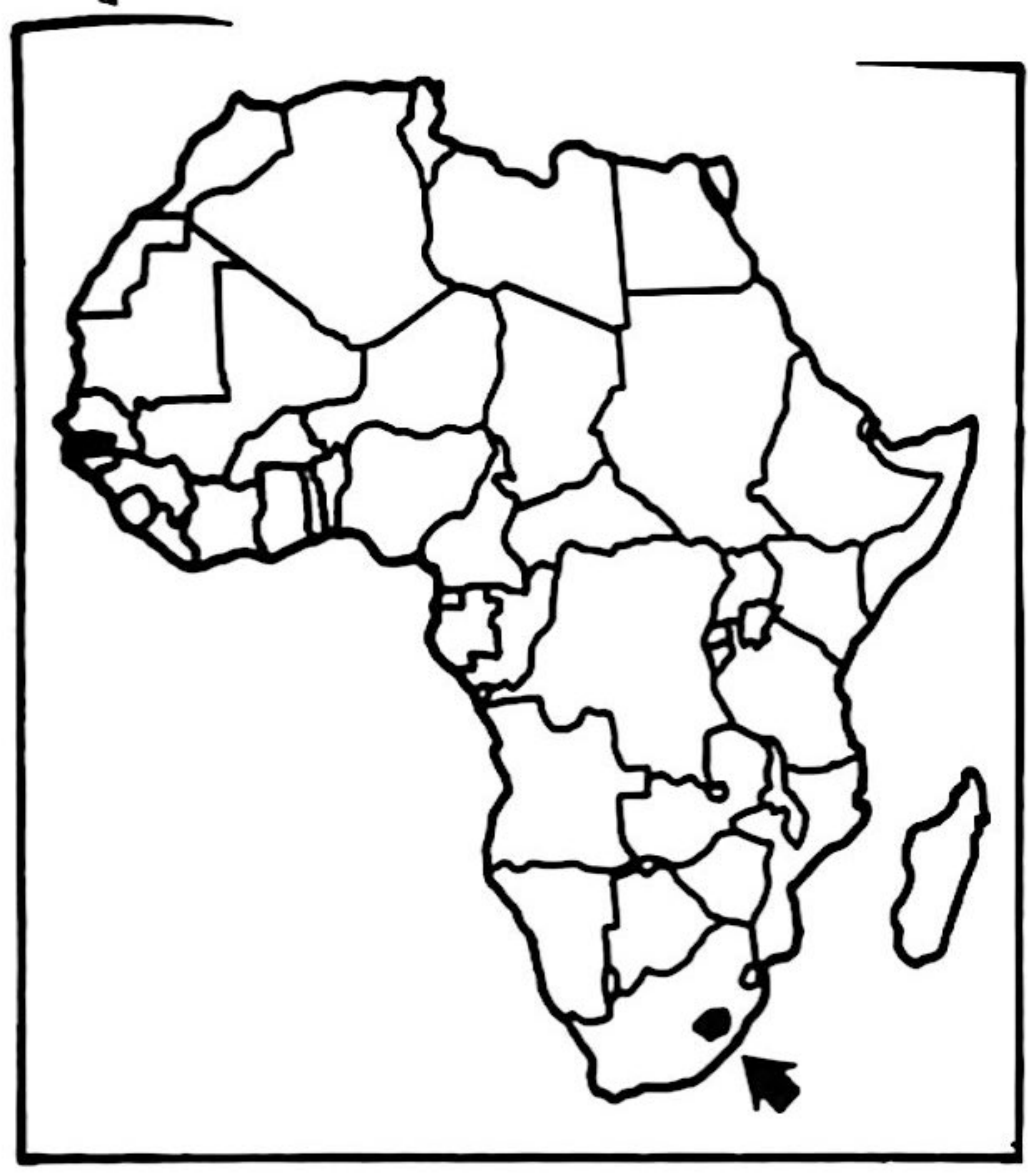
Public health: There are 2,300 doctors in Lebanon, one for every 1,300 inhabitants. There are 150 hospitals, and private and public clinics.

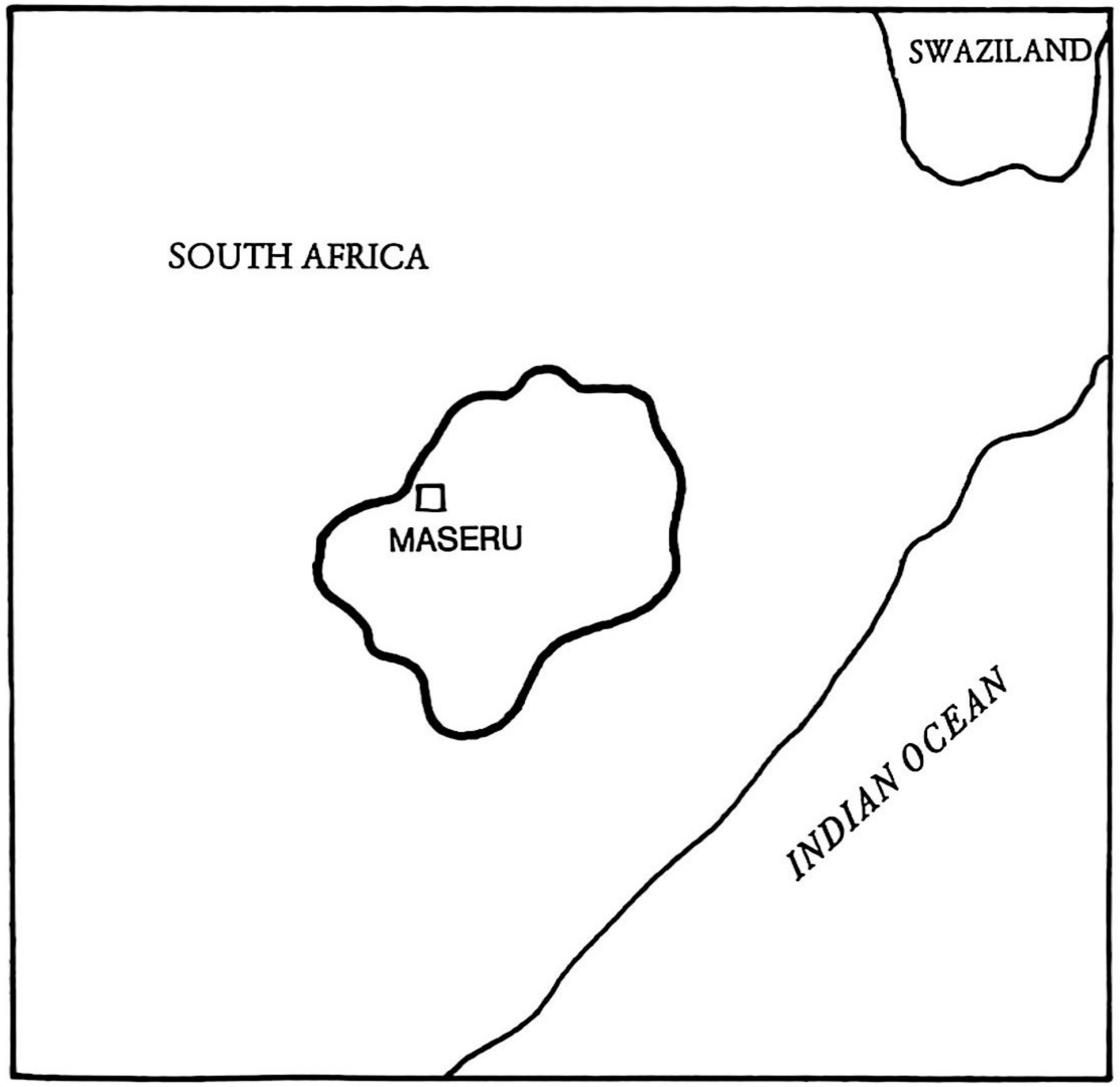
In 1976, the budgetary expenditures on public health did not exceed 56 million Lebanese pounds.

Religion: In view of its small area, Lebanon is one of the countries with the greatest diversity of religious denominations in the world. According to official data, the major religious groups and their estimated percentage share with respect to the population of the country are: Maronite Christians 30%, Sunni Moslems 20%, Shia Moslems 19%, Greek Orthodox 11%, Greek Catholics 6%, Druzes 6%, Orthodox Armenians 4%, Armenian Catholics 1%, Protestants 1%, and other denominations 2%.

There are some 14 religious communities in the country. The characteristic features of Lebanon's political organization make it difficult to determine precisely the actual size of each of these communities, and attempts to bring the available official figures up to date are being systematically obstructed. Under the National Pact, the major Christian group, the Maronites, holds the Presidency and other key posts in the government, thus constituting the majority group in the state apparatus, which is being disputed by the other communities, the Moslems in particular.

LESOTHO




SWAZILAND
SOUTH AFRICA
MASERU
INDIAN OCEAN

Official name: The Kingdom of Lesotho.
Area: 30,355 sq.km.
Borders: Lesotho is completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa. In the north and west it borders on the Orange Free State province, in the east on the province of Natal, and in the south on Cape Province.
Population: 1,300,000 inhabitants in 1980. The main ethnic groups are the Sotho (85%) and the Nguni (14%). The annual rate of population growth is 2.2%. 1% of the population are whites.
Capital: Maseru (approximately 30,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Leribe, Mefeteng, Mohales Hoek, Butha Buthe, Morija.
Languages: English. Also spoken are Sesotho, Xhosa and Zulu.
Public holidays: October 4, Independence Day (1966).
Geography: Almost two thirds of Lesotho's territory is mountainous. In the extreme northwest is the Mt. Aux Sources (3,480 m), the Maloti ridge occupies considerable space in the northeast, while the country's eastern frontier with South Africa's Natal province is formed by the Drakensberg range. Somewhat lower is a large plateau (ranging from 1,800 to 2,100 m in height) which descends in undulating waves towards the west (where it has an elevation of 1,800 to 2,100 m) along the frontier with the Orange Free State province of the Republic of South Africa. The mountains are basaltic and are mostly covered with vegetation, although unchecked erosion has denuded the slopes over an extensive area. In the northern highlands spring forth the two principal rivers, the Oranje, which flows from the north to the south where it enters South African territory, and the Tugela. Both rivers are tributaries of the Caledon. The Maletsu waterfall (193 m) is the largest one in the country. Rudimentary agriculture exists in the low-lying areas, mainly in the west. In the highlands there is abundant grass in places which have escaped erosion, and in protected and remote valleys subsist some native trees. The most common vegetation includes the wild olive, the willow, the aloe and a certain type of garlic. The autochthonous fauna is almost extinct with the exception of some small species of antelope, hares and reptiles. Cattle graze on the fertile outcrops of the higher plateau and in the valleys, where there are also flocks of sheep.

Rainfall varies, with most of it coming between October and April; its annual average is 710 mm. In the lowlands the temperature varies from 32°C in the summer to as low as -7°C in the winter. In the upper highlands and in the mountains the climate is much colder and sub-zero temperatures are normal, particularly in the winter season, that is from June to August. In that season, too, the mountains and high valleys are covered with snow. In the summer there are sometimes violent hailstorms.
Brief history: The primitive inhabitants of present-day Lesotho were the Kwena tribes which sought refuge from advancing nomadic peoples in the high montain ranges. In the early years of the 18th century, the Nguni people crossed the Drakensberg range and settled along the Caledon River. A century later the Zulu tribes invaded the area and killed most of its inhabitants. The survivors sought refuge in the mountains and in 1824 asked for protection of a local chieftain, King Moshesh (Moshoeshoe I), who had ruled the Basotho people since 1818. His main redoubt against the Zulu and Ndebele invaders were the Thebe Bosia Mountains. Then the Basotho had to contain attacks by the Boers (colonists of Dutch descent). Still later, differences broke out with the Orange Free State, and the chief of the Basotho sought British "protection" from Cape Colony.

In 1871, without any negotiations, the British Crown added Basutoland (as Lesotho had then been called) to its domain of Cape Colony; however, the Basotho people had already seen their territory reduced when the British proclaimed their sovereignty over territories adjacent to the Oranje River (originally known as the Senqu) in 1848. In 1854, the British renounced their rule over lands belonging to the Boers, and the Basotho people had to strive once again for their survival against Boer and British encroachments. In 1870, the Basotho King died and was later succeeded by his son, and later by his grandson. One year later, Great Britain took direct possession of the country.

In 1880, when the British tried to disarm the people, a rebellion broke out and the fighting continued for three years. In 1884, the territory fell under total British control, this time as a colony. The local chiefs remained in power as governors of their tribes in conformity with the established customs. In 1910, a Basutoland Council was established with the tribal chiefs, but executive authority remained in the hands of a British High Commissioner. In 1940, District Councils were set up. Between that year and 1958, many disputes had arisen among the tribal chiefs about who would occupy the post of the Supreme chief who had died.

In 1959 and 1960, a constitution was promulgated and a Legislative Body was established to replace the Basutoland Council. In order to counter the territorial aspirations of the South African regime, the British Crown announced that the country was under its protection and that it would not permit the self-proclaimed Republic of South Africa to govern it. In 1964, constitutional talks were held with the objective of establishing self-government in Basutoland. Elections were to be held the same year but the British authorities postponed them for twelve months.

The elections were finally held on April 29, 1965, but in July supplementary elections had to take place. The National Party of Basutoland won a parliamentary majority of only two seats. Leabua Jonathan was elected Prime Minister.

The country obtained its independence on October 4, 1966, adopting the name of Lesotho and the form of a constitutional monarchy. The King, Moshoeshoe II, was arrested in his residence two months later on orders of the Prime Minister, together with the leaders of the opposition political parties, mainly the nationalist Congress Party headed by Ntsu Mokhele. Striped of any real authority, Moshoeshoe II declared his acceptance of the instituted government.

General elections were scheduled for 1970 and the election campaign took place in the midst of official repression directed against the Basutoland Congress Party which opposed the government. The police attacked popular demonstrations held in support of that party. In December they arrested at a public political rally in the capital the head of the Congress Party, Ntsu Mokhele, and a dozen other party officials. Nevertheless, in the subsequent elections, the Basutoland Congress Party won the necessary majority for forming the government (32 of the 60 parliamentary seats). On January 27, 1970, only thirty minutes after the announcement of the election results, Mokhele was detained and then the King was placed under house arrest. Prime Minister Jonathan, who should have resigned his post, suspended the constitution and assumed the office of Chief of State as well as the posts of Minister of Defence and Chief of Internal Security. He ordered the application of "extraordinary" measures against his opponents with the approval of the racist South African regime and the benediction of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Four months later, the local press reported the disappearance of some 200 persons, most of them workers in the diamond mines at Kao and Mothael, some 100 kilometres northeast of the capital. The government confirmed the existence of some 600 to 1000 rebels in the mountains in the north and west of the country. In January 1974, an attack by armed men was reported against three police stations in the north, and the death of two of the attackers.

A significant change in Lesotho's foreign policy occurred in 1975, when its Prime Minister visited Tunisia and Morocco, where he declared that South Africa constituted a "threat to African Unity" and criticized the apartheid policy of the Pretoria regime. He also re-asserted his country's intention to strengthen its ties with the Organization of African Unity (OAU). On September 15, 1975, complying with United Nations decisions, the government of Lesotho announced its ban on all trade with Rhodesia, against which the United Nations had imposed sanctions because of its racist practices and the policy of apartheid pursued by its regime.

In recent years there have been many strikes in Lesotho, especially by miners, motivated by economic reasons.

Poverty and lack of job opportunities in their own country are forcing many Basotho to seek work in South Africa. This emigration affects approximately 45% of the country's labour force.

In order to improve this situation, the government undertook the task of developing some important economic projects, such as soil conservation, improvement of the cattle stock, introduction of fruit growing, organization of cereal-producing cooperatives, better use of chemical fertilizers, and others. However, Lesotho has very few technically trained people and suffers from a serious lack of mechanization, both of which hamper the realization of these projects.

Problems are also posed by the refugees coming to Lesotho from the Republic of South Africa. In the past only adults arrived in the country as emigres and they easily adjusted themselves to the new conditions of their life. However, after the events in Soweto, most of the arrivals have been students who have a distinct character and hold views to the left of the Kingdom of Lesotho.

As regards the opposition political party, all its leaders have been living in Lusaka since the reverse they suffered in 1974, but they are successful in guiding their party from there.

In the closing months of 1978, the Western powers, in particular Great Britain and the United States, stepped up their pressure to prevent Lesotho from expanding its relations with the anti-imperialist states of Africa.

On January 28, 1979, the Lesotho government announced that it had repelled an act of aggression against its territory, committed by a group of 300 South African soldiers.

In order to break out of its encirclement by the Republic of South Africa, Lesotho wants to establish an air link with Mozambique and Nigeria, for which purpose an international airport is nearing completion. Similarly, Lesotho is trying to disengage itself from economic dependence on South Africa and in order to do so has turned its efforts to other African and Middle Eastern countries.

Lesotho is a member of the United Nations Organization, and of the Organization of African States.

Economy: Subsistence farming is carried on in the agricultural sector on 355,000 hectares of the total arable area of 3,085,000 hectares by 85% of the economically active population; 45% of the male and 10% of the female labour force are seeking seasonal work in South Africa. According to FAO data, the principal agricultural products include oats, sorghum, wheat, maize, and dry peas. In 1976, livestock production was based on 580,000 head of cattle, 1,640,000 sheep, 915,000 goats, and 85,000 pigs. Industrial activity is extremely weak and is controlled by South African and other interests. Electric power production rose to 17,000 000 kWh between 1972 and 1973. The only important mining production is the extraction of diamonds by the South African firm De Beers Consolidated Mines. The output was 9,000 metric carats in 1973. Lesotho's gross national product amounted to 360 million dollars in 1978, while the national budget for the fiscal year 1974-1975 closed with a surplus of two million dollars. The balance of trade in 1973 showed a deficit of ten million dollars. The currency in use was the South African rand, but in January 1979, it was replaced by a national currency, the malothi. Lesotho is a member of the Southern African Customs Union Agreement which is being promoted and controlled by South Africa among the adjacent less developed African countries with the objective of eventually forming a South African Common Market. In 1977, the cost of living was 171.2% above the level of 1973, while according to World Bank figures, Lesotho's external public debt stood at 13.2 million dollars in 1975.

Government: The constitution was suspended in 1970 and since then work has been going on drafting a new basic law for the country.

Lesotho has a King as head-of-state. He is a constitutional monarch.

Executive power is vested in a Council of Ministers, which is headed by a Prime Minister who is the head of government.

Lesotho's parliament has two chambers. The Senate is made up of 22 principal chiefs and eleven other members appointed by the King. The National Assembly has 60 members elected by popular vote, one from every administrative district. There is universal suffrage.

Armed forces: Lesotho has no armed forces, only a police force of 1,500 men.

Organizations: Outlawed in 1970, the Communist Party of Lesotho pursues its activities under clandestine conditions. Founded on May 5, 1962, it held its 4th Congress in 1968. Its Chairman is Robert Matji and its General Secretary B. M. Khaketla.

The other political parties in Lesotho are the United Democratic Party of Lesotho, founded in 1969 and led by Charles Mofely, the National Basotho Party, which is of a rightist character, was founded in 1959, and is led by Leabua Jonathan, and the Congress Party, founded in 1952, which is the opposition party.

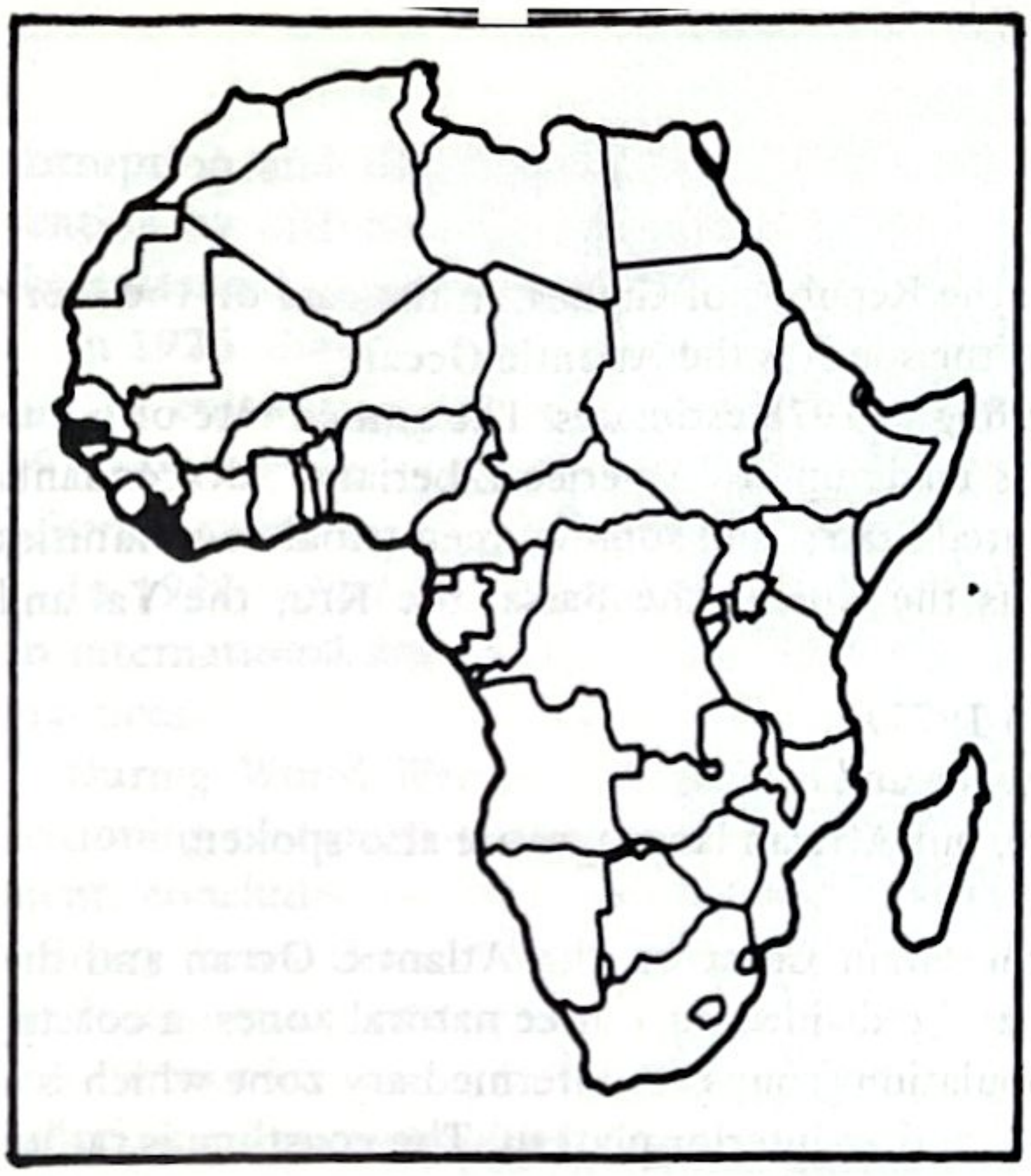
Education: Education is in the hands of Protestant and Roman Catholic missionaries. Only 51% of girls and boys of school age attend classes (between the ages of 5 and 19) and less than 9% complete their primary education and scarcely 3% proceed to secondary school. According to official information, there are some 1,300 primary and 29 secondary schools in the country, an agricultural training centre, and seven teacher training centres. About 370 students pursue higher education abroad. Lesotho has one university with an enrollment of 601 students (1976). According to the latest available figures, 30% of the student body of the University of Botswana come from Lesotho.

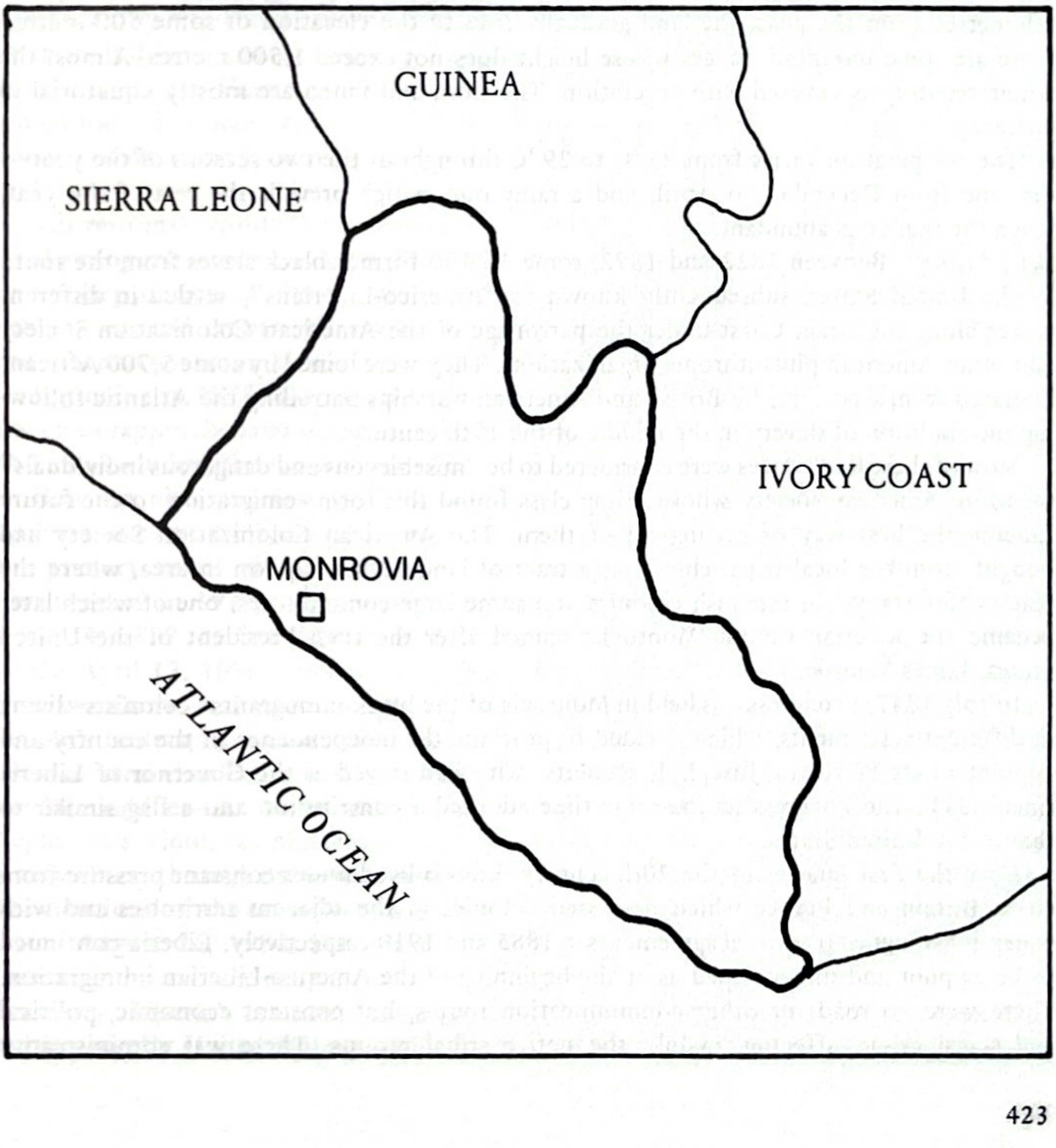
There is 60% illiteracy.

Public health: Poor nutrition is the cause of growth deformities and diseases due to malnutrition. Venereal diseases, chronic rheumatism, respiratory tract infections and dispepsy are also frequent. The life expectancy of men is 44 years and of women 48 years. There are some 20 hospitals, half of them run by the government, and several maternity and child clinics. In the mountains there are only a few first-aid stations. The country has 39 doctors, one for every 22,820 inhabitants (1975), and 1,878 hospital, beds, one for every 470 inhabitants (1975).

Religion: 70% of the population are of Christian faith, while the rest practice African religious cults.

LIBERIA




GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE
IVORY COAST
MONROVIA
ATLANTIC OCEAN

Official name: The Republic of Liberia.
Area: 111,369 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Liberia borders on the Republic of Guinea, in the east on the Ivory Coast, in the west on Sierra Leone, and in the south is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 1,750,000 inhabitants according to 1978 estimates. The annual rate of population growth is 2.88%. The population is made up of "Americo-Liberians", descendants of 19th century immigrants from the United States, and some sixteen tribal communities of the Nigerian-Congolese family, such as the Kpelle, the Bassa, the Kru, the Yai and others.
Capital: Monrovia (180,000 inhabitants in 1977).
Principal cities: Buchanan, Harper, Greenville, and others.
Languages: English is the official language, but African languages are also spoken.
Public holidays: April 12, Liberation Day (1980).
Geography: The country lies between the Grain Coast on the Atlantic Ocean and the Nimba mountainous area. Its territory may be divided into three natural zones: a coastal strip inhabited by the most important population groups, an intermediary zone which is a rolling landscape as it recedes from the sea, and an interior plateau. The coastline is rather uniform with some high and rocky spots and several good anchorages. Ten to twenty-five kilometres from the coast the land gradually rises to the elevation of some 500 metres; there are some mountain ranges whose height does not exceed 1,500 metres. Almost the whole territory is covered with vegetation. The flora and fauna are mostly equatorial in character.

The temperature varies from 23°C to 29°C throughout the two seasons of the year- a dry one from December to April, and a rainy one, which prevails the rest of the year, when the rainfall is abundant.

Brief history: Between 1822 and 1892, some 16,400 former black slaves from the south of the United States, subsequently known as "Americo-Liberians", settled in different places along the Grain Coast under the patronage of the American Colonization Society and other American philanthropic organizations. They were joined by some 5,700 Africans liberated from slave ships by British and American warships patrolling the Atlantic following the abolition of slavery in the middle of the 19th century.

Most of these freed slaves were considered to be "mischievous and dangerous individuals" by white American society whose ruling class found this form—emigration to the future Liberia—the best way of getting rid of them. The American Colonization Society had bought from the local tribal chieftains a tract of land 12,800 sq. km in area, where the black colonists would establish colonies and some large communities, one of which later became the Liberian capital, Monrovia, named after the then President of the United States, James Monroe.

In July 1847, a congress was held in Monrovia of the black immigrants—colonists—living in different settlements, which decided to proclaim the independence of the country and appoint as its President Joseph J. Roberts, who had served as the Governor of Liberia since 1841. The congress at the same time adopted a constitution and a flag similar to that of the United States.

Until the first quarter of the 20th century, Liberia lived under constant pressure from Great Britain and France which possessed colonies in the adjacent territories and with which it had signed territorial agreements in 1885 and 1910 respectively. Liberia continued to be as poor and undeveloped as at the beginning of the Americo-Liberian immigration. There were no roads or other communication routes, but constant economic, political and social crises, affecting mainly the native tribal groups. There was administrative

corruption and illegal commercial traffic with smuggled goods, besides threats of intervention by different U.S. governments which provided loans to Liberia in order to cover the national budget of the shaky republic.

In 1926, the U.S. monopoly, the Firestone Plantations Company, obtained a concession for the cultivation and exploitation of one million acres of land which was leased to it for 99 years for the purpose of growing rubber trees. This initiated the penetration of the Liberian economy by U.S. capital.

In 1930, when Liberia was one of the rare African members of the League of Nations, an international scandal broke out when the government was accused of engaging in slave practices.

During World War II, the United States reached an agreement with Liberia on the stationing of troops and the construction of an airfield in the country, while a new agreement, concluded in 1944, granted Washington the right to establish permanent naval and military bases there. That same year, William V. Tubman became President. As all his predecessors he belonged to the ruling minority of "Americo-Liberians". He tightened still further his country's relations with the United States and granted the right to vote to Liberia's native population.

In 1971, three years after he had begun his sixth term of office, Tubman died and was succeeded by the Vice-President, William Richard Tolbert. He re-organized public administration and launched a campaign against bureaucracy and officials best known for their close ties to the United States. Some steps were also taken to diversify the economy which until then had centred on the production of rubber and iron ore, both under the control of different financial groups mainly from the United States, West Germany, Japan and Sweden.

The reforms instituted by Tolbert after 1973 included administrative austerity, a system of planning and information, establishment of a national bank, the first development plan, and re-negotiation of the agreements granting concessions for the exploitation of iron, rubber trees and timber. After this revision of the agreements regarding iron ore extraction, the Liberian government obtained a share of the profits.

Beginning in 1972, Liberia expanded its diplomatic relations in an attempt to pursue a policy of rapprochement with the neighbouring countries, such as Guinea and Sierra Leone, and also including the socialist countries.

However, the open-door policy towards foreign capital was not altered, and investment opportunities were offered in the industrial sector, while no attention was paid to securing the primary needs of the great masses of the population. This policy provoked serious disturbances in 1979, which were brutally suppressed by the Tolbert government. On April 14, 1979, no less than a hundred people died in very grave street riots in Monrovia.

On April 12, 1980, a group of soldiers under the command of Sergeant Major Samuel Doe overthrew and executed Tolbert and replaced his government with a Council of People's Redemption which today governs the country. Two political parties which had been in semi-clandestine opposition to the previous government are now represented in the Doe cabinet—the Movement of Justice in Africa (MOJA), through its supreme leader, Togba Nah Tipoh, as Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs, and the People's Progressive Party through its leader, Gabriel Bacchus Matthews, as Minister of External Affairs. The new head of the armed forces is former Sergeant Major Thomas Quiwompka.

On August 26, 1980, Doe arrived in Addis Ababa for his first official visit abroad following the military coup.

Economy: Liberia's economy is based on agriculture and mining, which is controlled by foreign, mostly United States capital. The country has 11,137,000 hectares of agricultural land of which 366,000 hectares are cultivated by 75% of the economically active population estimated in 1974 at 595,000 persons. According to FAO figures, Liberia produces 230,000 tons of rice, 65,000 tons of bananas, 5,000 tons of coffee, 2,000 tons of cocoa, 16,000 tons of almonds, and 20,000 tons of cocoa oil, as well as 240,000 tons of manioc. The 2,500,000 hectares of forest produced 400,000 cu.m of timber in 1974 and 82,440 tons of natural rubber in 1977. Approximately 40% of the rubber production is in the hands of the U.S. Firestone Corporation which has reduced its operations. In livestock production there are some 176,000 sheep, 140,000 goats, 93,000 pigs, 35,000 head of cattle, and 2,000,000 poultry. The average annual catch of fish is 15,000 tons. In 1976, the mining industry exported 320,000 carats of diamonds and 20,500,000 metric tons of iron ore of which Liberia is one of the world's foremost exporters.

Industry, basically light, generated 613 million kWh of electricity in 1973, while in the same year the country's petroleum refining capacity was 600,000 tons. According to available data, the 1978 gross national product was 820,000,000 dollars. The national budget for the fiscal year 1975 ended with a surplus of 11,700,000 dollars, since revenues amounted to 133,500,000 dollars and expenditures to 121,800,000 dollars. The balance of trade in 1976 showed a surplus of 120,660,000 dollars, the result of exports worth 459,960,000 dollars—72% derived from sales of iron ore—and imports amounting to 339,300,000 dollars. One of the main sources of revenue for Liberia—besides iron ore and rubber—is the use of its national flag as a flag of convenience by foreign merchant vessels against the payment of 1.20 dollars per registered ton. In 1975, 150 foreign-owned navigation companies registered in Liberia 2,520 vessels (940 of them tankers) with a total displacement of 65,820,440 registered tons.

The cost of living index in the capital of Monrovia was 90 points higher than the 1970 level. According to the World Bank, Liberia's external public debt amounted to 169,700,000 dollars in 1975. The national currency is the dollar which has parity with the U.S. dollar. United States investments in Liberia totalled 348,000,000 dollars in 1976.

Government: After the military coup of April 1980, all power is concentrated in the hands of the Council of Popular Redemption.

Armed forces: In 1974, the army included a 5,000-man strong national Guard and a paramilitary force of 1,300 men. There was also a small naval force for coast-guard duties. In every army unit there are U.S. military advisers.

Organizations: The Council of Popular Redemption legally banned the only political organization officially recognized in Liberia by the previous governments, i.e. the True Whig Party, which was the name given to the old Whig Party originally founded by the "Americo-Liberians" in 1860.

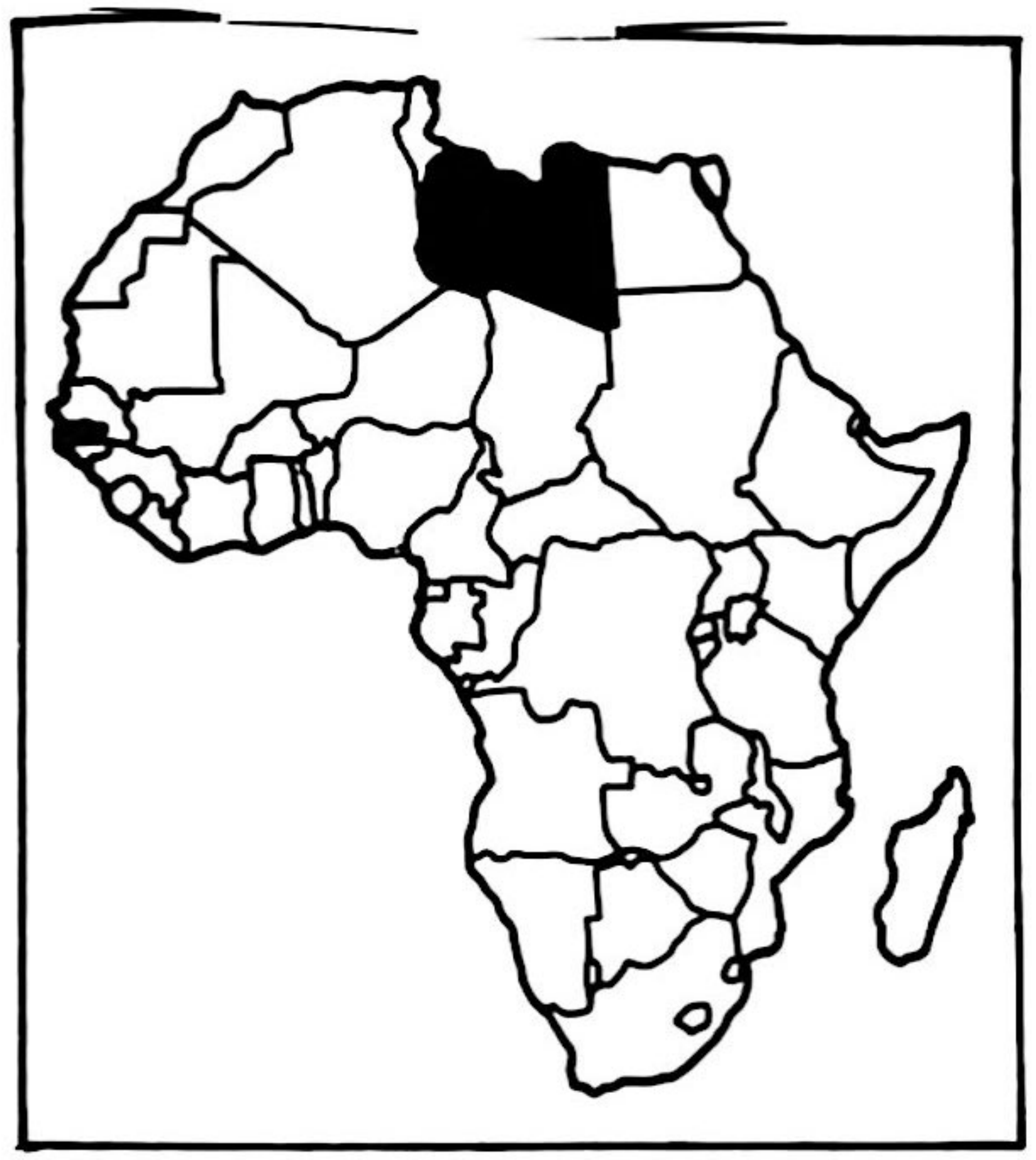
Education and sport: There is 76% illiteracy in the country. In 1974, 149,687 pupils attended primary schools, 26,426 students were enrolled in secondary schools, and 2,214 students pursued higher education.

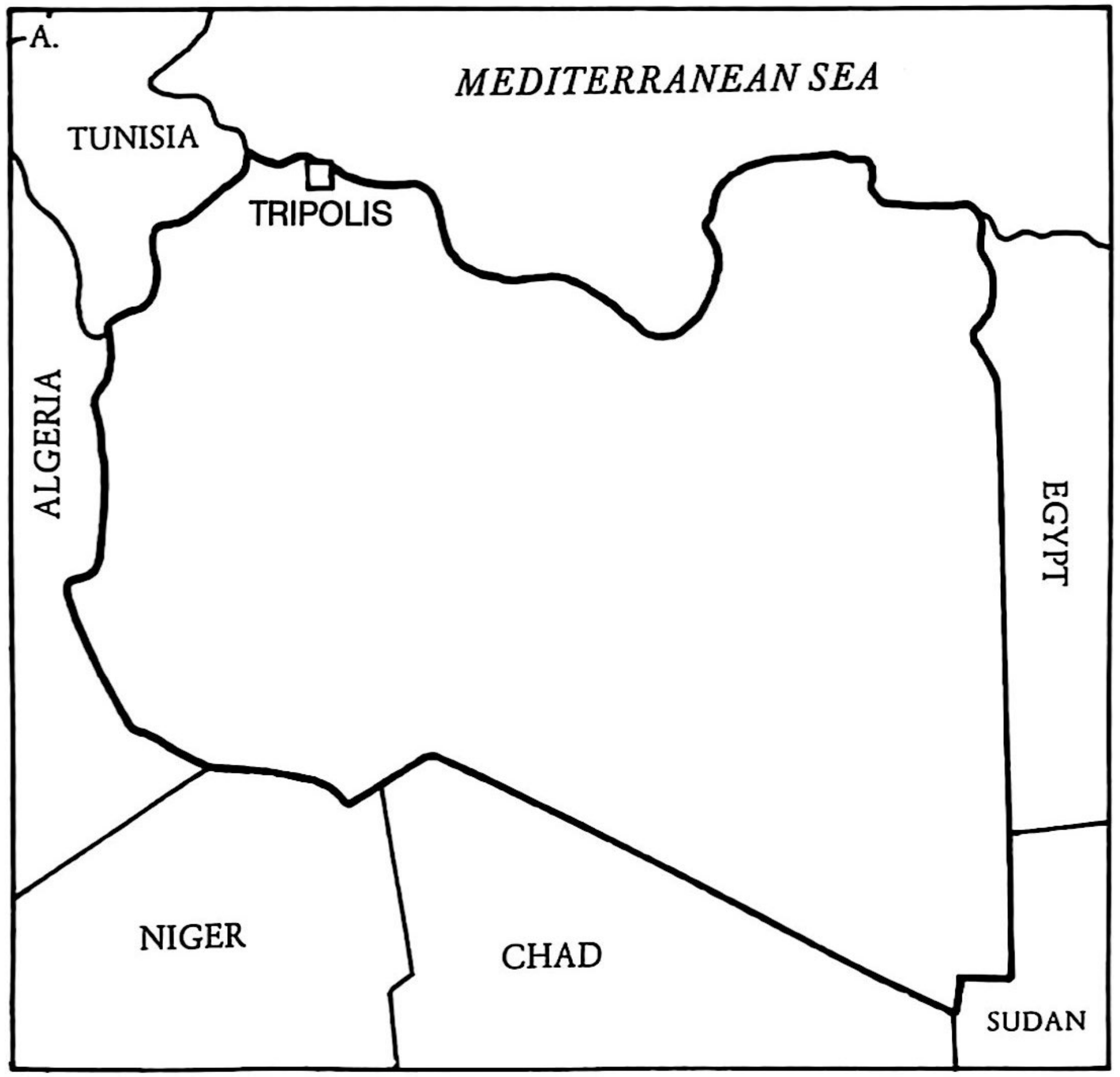
Football and athletics are the most popular sports in Liberia.

Public health: In 1973, there were 132 doctors and 2,446 hospital beds in Liberia. Half of all the doctors reside in the capital. There are only 13 dentists in the whole country. Such diseases as malaria, cholera and leprosy are quite common. The average life expectancy is 48 years.

Religion: There is no official religion in Liberia. The most widespread denominations are various Protestant churches and there are small numbers of Roman Catholics and Moslems.

LIBYA





Official name: Popular Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.
Area: 1,759,540 sq.km.
Borders: In the northwest Libya borders on Tunisia, in the west on Algeria, in the south on Niger and Chad, in the northeast on Sudan, and in the east on Egypt. In the north is the 1,900 km-long Mediterranean coast.
Population: 3,245,000 inhabitants according to 1979 estimates. The average annual rate of population growth was 3.8% in the period 1970-1978. 97% of the population are Arabs and Berbers.
Capital: Tripoli.
Principal cities: Benghazi, Misurata, Homs-Qussabat, Zawia, Quiran.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holiday: September 1, Anniversary of the Triumph of the Revolution of 1969.
Geography: Libya is situated in the north of the African continent on the southern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Most of its territory is covered by great deserts which are an extension of the Sahara and which spread over an area of more than one million square killometres.

The few stretches of fertile land are to be found along the Mediterranean coast. This is where most of the population lives. Water is to be found in abundance only underground. There are no permanent rivers and rain is infrequent. The driest month is July, when rainfall amounts to 94 mm. Libya has a temperate climate on the coastal plain where the temperature varies between 8°C and 16° in January and between 22°C and 30°C in August. In the desert the temperature reaches up to 50°C in the shade.

Brief history: It was at the end of the 19th century when the territory lying between Tunisia and Egypt (Tripolitania and Cyrenaica) began to be called Libya, a name derived from that of a legendary woman—Lubia—the chief of one of the tribes inhabiting the region. These two regions, i.e. Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, had been inhabited since prehistoric times by peoples who already in the neolithic period had a well-developed agriculture.

A thousand years before our era, nomadic tribes in the area of El Fezzan made their living by cattle raising.

Between the 8th and 6th centuries B.C. the territory of present-day Libya fell successively under the domination of the Phoenicians (Tripolitania) and the Greeks (Cyrenaica), who founded there a number of cities.

Later, when Tripolitiania fell under Carthaginian and subsequently Roman rule, Cyrenaica came at the end of the 6th century B.C. under Persian control and, still later, after the creation of the empire of Alexander the Great, under Egyptian supremacy.

In the 1st century, the Roman Empire conquered the cities founded by the Phoenicians and established the province of New Africa, which extended from the Mediterranean to El Fezzan. At that time the region suffered from Barbarian invasions, in particular of the Vandals. Subsequently, however, it returned under the rule of the Byzantine Empire.

In the second half of the 7th century, the Arab invasion began and the population of the area fell under the rule of the Baghdad Caliphate. It was also converted to Islam.

The Berber tribes which inhabited the region joined in the course of those years the invading forces of the Caliphate, which moved on to the Iberian Peninsula.

At that time the main economic activity in that part of the African continent was piracy, turned mostly against Europe.

At the beginning of the 16th century Spain invaded Tripoli in its drive to conquer the principal cities of the Maghreb, engaged in piracy. Their inhabitants put up stiff resistance. Later, the Spanish crown tried to dominate the area by appointing a *pasha* (prince) for each geographical region. Piracy was officially encouraged and successive uprisings of the local population began to break out.

During the 17th, 18th and a good part of the 19th century the country's economy was sustained by piracy and the slave trade, which provoked naval raids by the Christian powers of Europe.

At the end of the 16th century, the Turks, who had begun their domination of Libya, ran into resistance by the Senusi tribe, a religious brotherhood from the mountains of Cyrenaica, which founded a number of fraternities *(Zawia)* throughout the country and in a large part of northern Africa.

Turkish rule lasted from the 16th century until 1911, when Italy seized the country. Nominally all of Libya fell under Italian occupation but, in fact, the Italians could dominate only the strip of coast from Tripoli to Tobruk due to the widespread resistance of the local population.

When fascism engulfed Italy, Libya gained a great military importance. In 1922 it was divided into three zones and a number of concentration camps were built to suppress the population, in particular the tribes living in the mountains of Cyrenaica, where the rebel leader Omar Mukhtaf put up resistance until 1931, when he was surrounded and killed by the invaders.

The years of Italian occupation until the fall of the Mussolini regime were a period of social and economic retrogression for Libya. The population suffered from racial persecution and from a ban placed on Moslem customs and culture. The authorities also encouraged the settlement of Italian colonists to replace gradually the native population.

During World War II, Libya became the stage of major military operations and battles between the Nazi armies under the command of Marshal Rommel and the British forces led by Marshal Montgomery. It was occupied by Nazi troops which abandoned it to British forces after a number of bloody battles in 1942. Great Britain then set up a military colonial administration in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, while the French occupied El Fezzan.

After the war the future of Libya was the subject of great controversy among the capitalist powers. When no agreement had been reached, Great Britain recognized in 1949 the Emir Sayad Idris of Cyrenaica, who was the chief of the Moslem tribe of the Senusis and who had collaborated with the Allied forces in expelling the fascists from his territory. Some months later the United Nations agreed to grant Libya independence.

The independence of Libya was proclaimed in Benghazi on December 24, 1951, together with the establishment of a hereditary monarchy whose head was Idris I. The new kingdom came into being with British military bases on its territory and with a concession granted to the United States for the construction of a strategic air base in exchange for a promise of economic aid.

In 1953 Libya joined the Arab League and in the same year the monarch granted the first concessions to foreign companies for petroleum prospecting. The French occupation of El Fezzan ended by agreement on 1954, and in 1955 Libya was admitted to the United Nations Organization.

Beginning in 1960, Libya became one of the world's major petroleum producers. Its economy was completely changed by the tremendous income derived from petroleum royalties. However, the exploited and the marginal classes did not benefit from this income at all and the country, basically agricultural, remained utterly backward. The small group of the economically privileged lived off the petroleum revenue and the large import business.

The kingdom established a harsh patriarchal regime which did not permit any social or political opposition movements. The King and his interests were at the centre of the country's official and political life.

Until 1963 the Libyan state was of a federal type, divided into three regions. A constitution adopted in 1965 abolished the system of three provinces (Tripolitania, Cyrenaica and Fezzan) and a unitary system of government was introduced with a division of the country into ten administrative districts. Libya's foreign policy was formally based on traditional solidarity with the Arab world, but the country's dependence on the petroleum trusts, in particular those of the United States, steadily grew. With the construction of Wheelus Field, the United States had in Libya its largest foreign air base, which it used for asserting its aggressive policy in the countries of Africa and the Middle East.

On September 1, 1969, a group of young officers, headed by then Captain Muammar al-Gaddafi, used the opportunity of the King's absence from the country to carry out a coup and to launch a process of anti-feudal transformation. The monarchy was abolished and the Arab Republic of Libya was instituted, governed by a Supreme Revolutionary Council whose Chairman was Gaddafi.

The new regime, which raised as its principal slogan nationalism and Arab solidarity, demanded the immediate withdrawal of the British and American troops from their bases in Tobruk, El Adam and Wheelus Field, which were returned to the Libyan government in 1970. At the same time the new government banned the use of English language and instituted Arabic as the official language. It placed restrictions on foreign concessions, nationalized the key petroleum companies and expropriated uncultivated foreign-owned land for distribution to poor peasants. In the social sphere it initiated an ambitous programme of construction, mainly of housing, and introduced compulsory education as well as a free medical service. It encouraged the practice of Islam.

In the first half of the 1970s the government launched a broad programme of industrial development on the basis of cooperation and commercial exchange, in which an important role was played by a technical assistance agreement concluded with the Soviet Union in 1972.

At the end of 1976 a process was launched, designed to furnish the country with new government bodies and institutions. The General People's Congress agreed at its session in November of that year to submit to public discussion a project entitled "Proclamation on the Institution of the People's Authority", which was viewed as something of an organic law of the state.

This document, intended to replace the constitution put into effect after the victory of the revolution of September 1, 1969, called for a change in the name of the country, instituted a new source of legislative power, and outlined the structure of people's power.

The document was discussed at all levels—in local people's assemblies, in professional committees, in regional People's Congresses, etc.—up to the General People's Congress which met at an extraordinary session in March 1977 at Sebha, a town considered to be the cradle of the Libyan revolution.

The session approved the new name of the country—the Popular Socialist Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. The "Proclamation" became law and a new structure and nomenclature of government bodies and institutions was adopted (see under "Government").

Muammar al-Gaddafi was elected Secretary-General of the General People's Congress but later resigned from that office, although he remains the leader of the Libyan revolution.

Internationally, Libya is a non-aligned country which has proclaimed its support of national liberation movements and, in particular, of the cause of the Palestinian people. It has also expressed on many occassions its support for the independence of the Saharoui people, and maintains close ties of friendship and cooperation with the socialist countries. Gaddafi is a firm advocate of unity of the Arab peoples.

Libya, together with Algeria, Syria, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, and the Palestine Liberation Organization, has resolutely opposed the Egyptian-Israeli dialogue which was launched by the visit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Jerusalem in 1977.

These four countries and the PLO form the Front of Steadfastness and held summit meetings in December 1977, February 1978, and September 1978. Libya has very strongly condemned the Camp David agreements whereby Egypt and Israel, under Washington's auspices, signed a separate peace treaty, ignoring the other Arab countries and the PLO.

The policy pursued by Anwar Sadat has produced tension in the relations between Egypt and Libya. In July 1977 the Egyptian army invaded Libyan territory.

Libya provided assistance to the National Front for the Liberation of Chad (FROLIMAT) in its long struggle against French neo-colonialism. In 1980, at the request of President Gukuni Gueddei of Chad, Libyan forces helped put an end to factional fighting in that country, fomented by France. During a visit to Tripoli, Gueddei thanked the Libyans for their assistance which, he said, makes it possible to put into effect his plan of national reconciliation and reconstruction.

Economy: The Libyan economy evolves around the extraction and export of petroleum. 103,500,000 tons of petroleum were produced in Libya in 1979—more than 70% by the state sector—which brought the country 95% of its foreign-exchange earnings. There are six refineries in Libya with a total processing capacity of 45,000,000 tons annually. The construction of three more refineries is planned, as well as of a number of petrochemical plants. The known petroleum reserves are estimated at 3,000,000,000 tons, which equals thirty years of production at the present rate. In view of the future depletion of this non-renewable natural resource, Libya is limiting extraction and at the same time is investing large sums in developing other sectors of the national economy, such as industry and agriculture. Thanks to these efforts, industrial production in 1979 was 15.7% higher than in 1978, while in the same period agricultural production went up 8.5%

Libya has 2,521,000 hectares of arable land in the north and large investments are being made to recover and put under cultivation arid lands by irrigation. According to FAO figures, Libya produced in 1978: 98,000 tons of wheat, 200,000 tons of barley, 44,000 tons of citrus fruit, 220,000 tons of tomatoes, 85,000 tons of dates, and 90,000 tons of potatoes, in addition to other crops for domestic consumption. The same report showed that Libya had in that year, 4,680,000 sheep, 200,000 head of cattle, 2,100,000 goats, 75,000 camels, 73,000 donkeys, and 14,000 horses, as well as 5,500,000 chickens and other poultry.

Libya has the highest per capita income in Africa—6,910 dollars in 1978. Libya's GNP in that year was close to 21,000,000,000 dollars. According to available data, its international monetary reserves amounted to 10,739,000,000 dollars in 1980. The 1979 balance of trade showed a surplus of 7,728,758,000 dollars when exports amounted to 15,200,048,000 dollars and imports to 7,471,290,000 dollars.

The national currency is the Libyan dinar whose rate of exchange in 1980 was one dinar per 3.37 U.S. dollars.

Government: The General People's Congress is the supreme authority in the country and consists of a General Secretariat, made up of the Secretary-General and four members, and an Assembly of People's Congresses, Committees and Trade Unions.

The General People's Committee (Council of Ministers) is the executive body of the government; it has a Chairman (Prime Minister) and 25 Secretaries (Ministers).

The duties of the General Secretariat include implementation of the state policy adopted by the Congress and consideration and drafting of legislation in keeping with the recommendations and decisions of the supreme national body, i.e. the General Congress.

The Secretary-General presides over sessions of the Assembly of People's Congresses, signs laws and accepts the credentials of representatives of other countries; he may also temporarily substitute for the Chairman of the General People's Committee if the latter is absent or otherwise impeded.

The population forms Local People's Congresses which elect a managing commitee consisting of an executive secretary and two assistants.

Members of the People's Congresses elect People's Committees charged with the administration of various services; these committees are accountable to their constitutents.

The General People's Congress is thus a meeting of the Local People's Congresses, the People's Committees and the trade unions.

Armed forces: Libya's armed forces of some 42,000 men consist of the army, the navy and the air force. Military service is obligatory for men and women 18 to 35 years old, while students receive their military training in general throughout their course of study. Military duty is four years in the air force, navy and air defence, and three years in the army.

The foreign—British and United States—military bases which had existed in the country were evacuated on March 28 and June 11, 1970, respectively.

Organizations: There are Unions of Professionals (trade unions organized according to individual trades and professions), the Unions of Students, the Federation of Women, and the Peasant League.

Culture, education and sports: Libya is striving to revitalize its national culture, to promote study of the country's history, and to discover and restore historical monuments. About 3,000 years ago the ancient Phoenicians built three cities (Sabratha, Leptis Magna and Ooa) on what is today the territory of Libya. These cities became economic centres of the Phoenician colonies in the north of Africa, and scholars believe that Leptis Magna was the oldest city of those colonies. For a long time it was a colony first of Carthage and then of Rome, and in the 6th century A.D. it was destroyed by the Byzantines.

When the European powers—Italy, Great Britain and France—dominated Libyan territory, for years they removed from the country remnants of this centre of ancient civilizations. Some 600 pieces of statuary and architectural treasures from Leptis Magna decorate the Versailles Palace in France. A similar number of historical treasures are to be found in Great Britain. The same fate befell the other ancient city, Sabratha.

Addressing the Fifth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries, Colonel Gaddafi demanded that the Western countries return the cultural and artistic treasures they had stolen during the colonial era. Libya put into effect a decree establishing a Syndicate of Culture and Arts, which has the duty to promote the revival of national culture.

Leptis Magna and Sabratha are national museums, and the ancient theatre in Sabratha has been reconstructed. As all Roman amphitheatres, it has the remarkable feature that. although it has no roof, anything spoken or even whispered on stage is heard throughout the amphitheatre.

The ancient art and the secrets of the builders of the Antiquity are being studied while excavations continue.

It was in Ooa, the third Phoenician city, where—although it had not been the principal of the three—the actual capital of Libya was founded. It contains many historical monuments, including the statue of a Roman emperor. All these relics are carefully conserved.

The financial and human resources invested in education over the past decade have been great and have made it possible to drastically reduce illiteracy, to build new schools throughout the country, and to increase the number of pupils and students at all levels of the education system.

According to official figures, in the school term 1976-1977 there were 571,723 pupils attending primary schools, 152,512 were taking courses in preparatory schools, 20,846 students attended secondary schools, 21,719 were enrolled in higher secondary schools, and 4,990 in vocational schools. There are two universities—in Tripoli and in Benghazi. The latter was built only a few years ago. Both have a total enrolment of 15,000 students.

Special institutions have also been established for training experts for the petroleum industry, and an annual average of 300 students are attending petrochemical courses abroad.

The law stipulates that access to education is the right of all citizens, but that it is also their duty to complete their education at least through the preparatory school.

Football is the most popular sport in Libya.

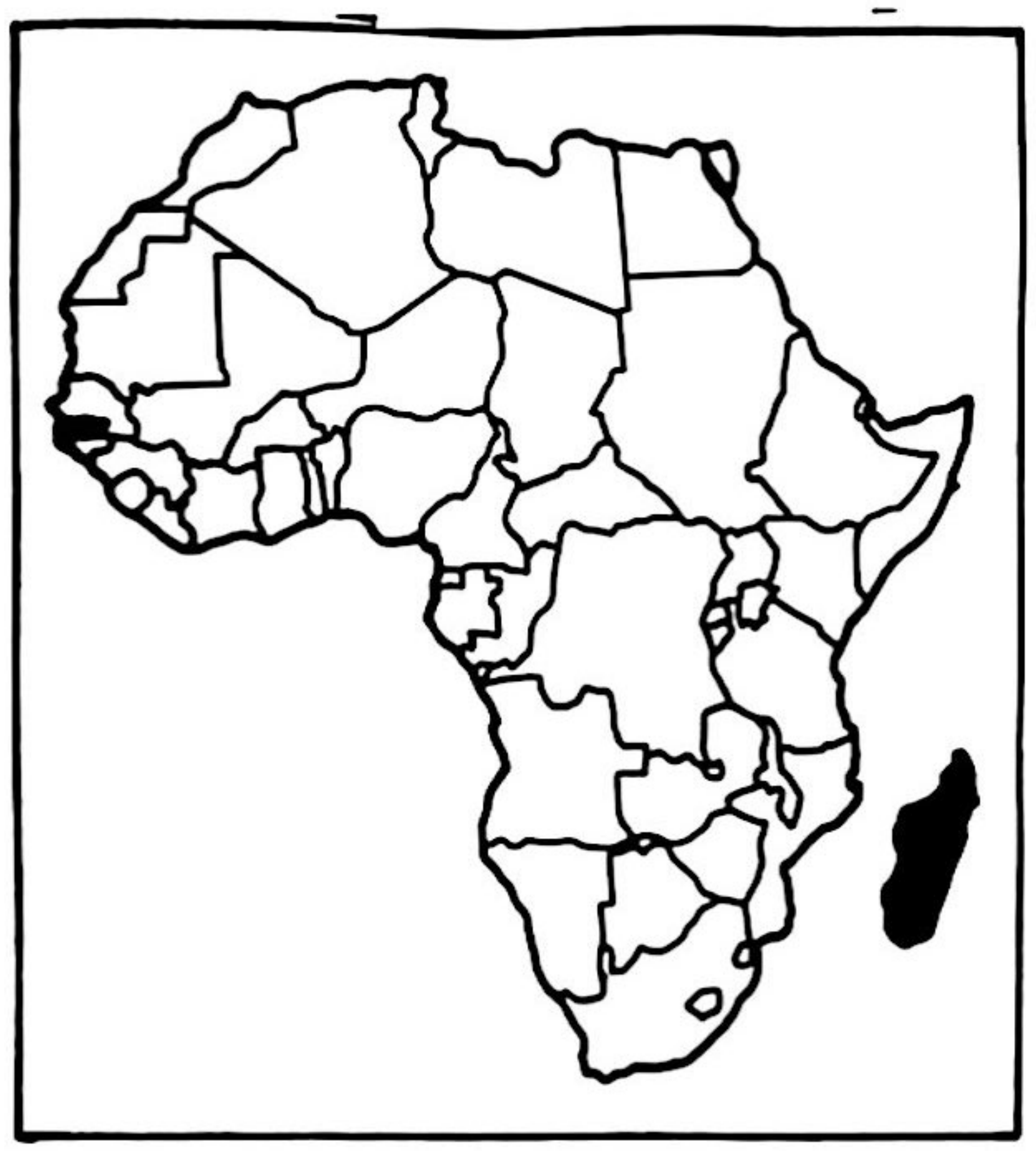
Public health: Medical care is free for all. Thanks to a programme of sanitation measures being put into effect, malaria has been eradicated and mortality due to tuberculosis has been greatly reduced. The two were Libya's major scourges prior to 1969.

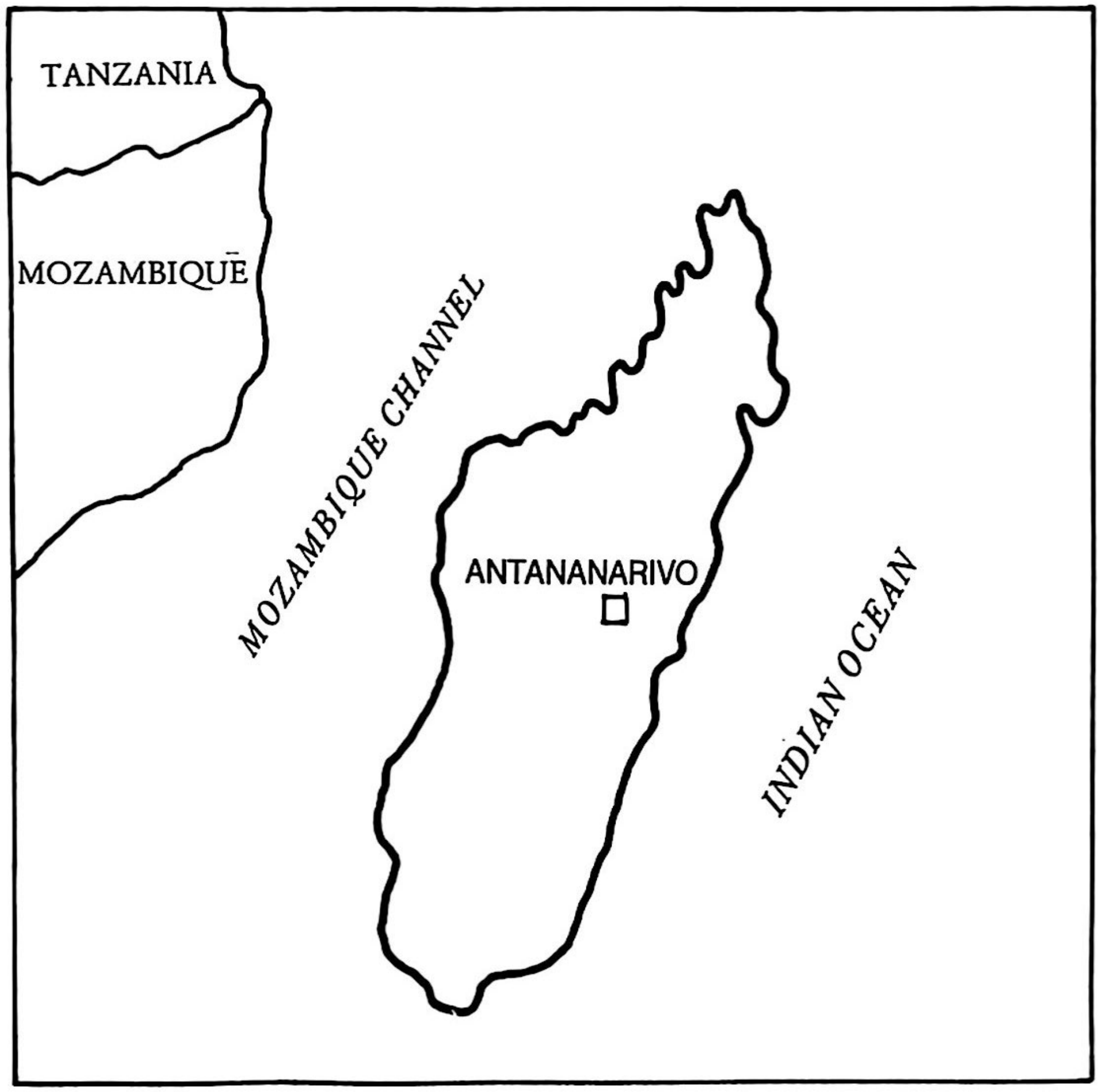
Large investments are being made into the sanitary infrastructure, and the programme of hospital construction still continues with the cooperation of a number of socialist states which, in addition, provide assistance to Libya with their medical and nursing personnel and by training Libyan doctors. A new general hospital was opened in Tripoli in 1976, and 16 new polyclinics went into operation in 1977.

In 1978 there were 85 hospitals in the country with a total capacity of 4.5 beds per thousand inhabitants. In that year there was one doctor for every 900 inhabitants. These figures constantly change because of the rapid pace of investments in this sector.

Religion: Islam, which is being practiced by 98% of the population, is the official religion in Libya. There is also a small Christian community.

MADAGASCAR




TANZANIA
MOZAMBIQUE
MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL
ANTANANARIVO
INDIAN OCEAN

Official name: The Democratic Republic of Madagascar.
Area: 587,041 sq.km. From Cap d'Ambre to Cap Sainte-Marie the island is 1,600 km long and has a coast of 5,000 km.
Borders: The island is situated in the Indian Ocean, 400 km from the southeastern coast of the African continent from which it is separated by the Mozambique Channel.
Population: 8,511,000 inhabitants in 1979, 15% or them urban. Annual rate of population growth is 2.6%. The main ethnic groups are the Merina, the Bebsileo, the Sakalova, the Betsimisaroka, the Tsimihety, the Antandroy, and the Anbesaka. There are a total of 18 ethnic groups living in the country.
Capital: Antananarivo.
Principal cities: Majunga, Toamasina (the former Tamatave), Fianarantsoa and Antsirabe, Toliary (the former Tulear), Antsevanana, and Mahajanga.
Languages: Malagasy is the official language and French is the second language.
Public holidays: June 26, Independence Day (1960).
Geography: The island, the fourth largest in the world and the largest one of the African continent, consists of three natural areas—an extensive central plateau of volcanic origin, spreading from the north to the south, a narrow coastal strip to the east, 50 kilometres wide at its narrowest point, and an area of low plateaus and plains at the foot of the western slopes. Adjoining Madagascar are many small islands, including Mossi-Be, Santa Maria, Bassas da India, Europa, and Juan de Nova in the Mozambique Channel. Volcanic rocks form a chain of massifs whose highest points are the Massif of Tsaratanana (2,886 m) in the north and the Massif of Tsiafajavona (2,638 m) in the central part of the island.

The coast is rimmed in many places with lagoons and marshes and has many coves and small bays. The most important of them is the Antongil Bay in the northwest.

The hydrographic network is very dense due to frequent rainfall which in most parts of the island exceeds 2,000 mm annually. The most important rivers drain into the Mozambique Channel, but their course is short and turbulent because of many waterfalls and rapids. The largest of the rivers is the Betsiboka, which is 800 km long and is navigable in its lower reaches, but only for flat-bottom boats.

The climate is distinctly tropical, although there are marked differences between the eastern and the western parts of the island. The eastern part is affected by the northeastern monsoon and southeastern trade-winds, and therefore gets plenty of rainfall throughout the year. The temperature is high and constant in the low-lying areas without any great changes. On the other hand, the western slopes, which are exposed only to the summer monsoon, get rain in the summer. The southern and northwestern coasts have little rainfall. In the interior the temperature is modified by altitude, and rainfall, especially in the north, is plentiful.

Brief history: Some historians believe that the first inhabitants reached Madagascar some centuries before our era and already knew how to extract and shape iron. Malay, Indonesian and even Polynesian navigators made long voyages thousands of miles along the coasts of the Indian Ocean in their fragile boats until they reached the large, uninhabited island with a magnificent climate, fertile coastal plains, plateaus and forests with plenty of game. Immigrants of Bantu origin from the African mainland had to cross a much shorter distance to reach Madagascar from the opposite direction. Arab sailors began to arrive somewhat later, beginning in the 7th century and in the course of the Middle Ages. However, the discoverers and explorers of the island's interior were the Portuguese. One of them, Diego Diaz, reached Madagascar on August 10, 1500, and named it St. Lawrence Island. Its territory was inhabited by different tribes, some of Malay-Polynesian origin, as well as by Arab and Indian groups. In the 16th century, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French competed for the establishment of colonies on the island. The French laid claim to the north of Madagascar in the 17th century, but their sphere of influence was limited by the ascendancy of the Hova monarchy in the central high plateau.

King Radama I (1810-1828) favoured the British and permitted the introduction of Christianity, but his successor, Queen Ranavalona I (1828-1861) banned Christaina religious practices and stopped trading with the Europeans. A period of tense relations followed. Radama II granted concessions to a French company but was assassinated in 1863, and his widow, Rasoberina, who succeeded him, refused to ratify the agreement with the French.

Paris recognized Ranavalona II as the Queen of Madagascar and accredited a consul at her court, as did Great Britain and the United States. Earlier, France imposed by force (1885) a protectorate over the island, which Britain recognized in 1890 in exchange for concessions in Zanzibar.

In 1895, when France demanded by an ultimatum total control of the island, its inhabitants rebelled but were defeated. Since then dates a constant and valiant struggle of the people of Madagascar for the re-establishment of their national sovereignty. Another uprising, in 1896, was drowned in blood, and Madagascar with its dependencies became a French colony.

France abolished the monarchy and launched a "pacification" programme which cost the lives of 700,000 natives within a span of 20 years. Queen Ranavalona III was deported to Reunion Island and then to Algeria.

Progressive movements which emerged in 1916 and 1929 were also crushed, but the Malagasy people rose in yet another protest on March 29, 1947. Some 100,000 people died as a result of the brutal repression unleashed by the French authorities.

The island was given a number of statutory forms—that of a state associated with the French Union (1946), semi-autonomy (1957), autonomous republic within the French Community (1958), and independence within the French Community (1960).

Philibert Tsiranana assumed power in 1960 at the head of the Social Democratic Party which then held a majority in the country, and pursued a policy subservient to French interests and strongly oppressive to the people.

Under Tsiranana, the Malagasy Republic was a vassal and subject state of French neo-colonialism, a bulwark of imperialist strategy in the Indian Ocean and Africa. It had a regime tied to Paris by cooperation agreements utterly unfavourable for the country. These guaranteed to the metropolis the maintenance of military bases of occupation forces on the island, just as exorbitant advantages and privileges permitted a systematic and brutal exploitation of all natural resources, the country's mineral and agricultural wealth, through possession by the colonialists of the best land and through the continued existence of companies which (by limiting their operations to the export of tropical products and import of consumer goods) did not stimulate productive activity or the growth of a national industry.

The situation became further aggravated when the colonial administrators left the country and were immediately replaced in all the key positions by a bureaucratic bourgeoisie with a feudal administrative mentality.

In the period of the Tsiranana government agriculture—the principal economic sector—steadily deteriorated and the country which had always covered its needs of rice, the staple food, had to import in some years as much as 50,000 tons of this cereal in order to provide profit to the foreign import and export companies.

Unemployment, too, was a disgrace and in the capital city with its 400,000 inhabitants, 41.2% of the economically active population were registered as jobless.

The foreign businessmen had moreover gained control of foreign trade and in the last years of the Tsiranana government the annual trade deficit amounted to some 10,000 million Malagasy francs.

The Tsiranana regime maintained very good relations with the South African and Rhodesian racists, the Salazar and Caetano regimes in Portugal, Israel, and the United States intelligence services.

In 1971, large segments of students, workers and peasants, the last constituting 85% of the population, began to show strong opposition to the French penetration of the economic, cultural and educational spheres.

The steadily deterioriating economic situation and living conditions were one of the factors which caused, in April 1971, the outbreak of an insurrection in Tulear, in the south of Madagascar, led by Monja Joana, the head of MONIMA, a political party of a tribal character, whose membership was basically of peasant origin. The peasant rebellion was crushed and its leaders were thrown into prison, but demonstrations erupted with new strength in the subsequent months.

1972 was a year of great decisions. In May, workers, peasants, students, intellectuals, as well as progressively-minded soldiers, swept away the neo-colonialist regime of Tsiranana, which surrendered its powers to Gabriel Ramanantsoa.

Ramanantsoa initiated a policy of economic, political and social changes which conflicted with the interests of the country's ruling classes.

Late in 1972 and at the beginning of 1973, anti-government acts took place in different towns, aimed, among other things, at stirring up tribal divergencies. In July 1973, a foreign-inspired plot was uncovered, which was designed to incite against each other the people of the coastal areas and the inhabitants of the interior. The hostile elements did not hesitate to use sabotage and subversion, and the reactionary forces obstructed the normal supply of rice to the urban areas.

The socio-economic reforms put into effect by Ramanantsoa met from the very beginning with violent opposition of the land-owning and mercantile bourgeoisie. The restrictions placed on land ownership by both Malagasy nationals and foreigners, just as the strict controls placed on the activities of Western companies, further intensified the opposition of these forces against the Ramanantsoa government.

The foreign colonists, who had a monopoly on industrial crops, were affected by the transfer of their properties to agricultural cooperatives.

One of Ramanantsoa's first decisions was to approve and implement a change in the country's foreign policy, which involved a break of relations with the Republic of South Africa and with Israel, and the establishment of closer relations with the socialist community and the independent nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Madagascar established diplomatic ties with the Soviet Union in October 1972, with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in December 1972, with the Royal Government of National Union of Cambodia in December 1972, and with Cuba in April 1974.

The policy of independent economic development pursued by the Ramanantsoa government, coupled with the departure of Madagascar from the franc zone and with the revision of its cooperation agreements with France—they were mostly of a military character—led to an attempt by the enemy forces to produce a radical change.

Through the revision of the Franco-Malagasy treaties, Madagascar achieved the complete withdrawal of French forces from the Ivato air base and from the naval base at Diego Suarez.

The Ramanantsoa government was confronted by an internal crisis from the end of December 1974, as the result of a conspiracy between some sections of the military and certain African political groups tied with foreign capital in Madagascar. In the face of the grave situation, the government adopted strict measures against the insurgents who had found refuge in the Antanimora Camp on the outskirts of the Malagasy capital.

On January 25, 1975, Ramanantsoa resigned because of the "difficult situation in which the nation is finding itself". Under the provisions of the Law of October 8, 1972, Ramanantsoa transferred all his authority to the former Minister of the Interior, Colonel Richard Ratsimandrava.

The crisis which brought Ratsimandrava to power and which led to his subsequent assassination was produced by the nationalization of more than 250 large private estates, a move which affected the interests of the big landlords who exploited some half a million hectares of land.

The Ratsimandrava government was short-lived. Ratsimandrava himself died on February 11, 1975, of wounds suffered in an assassination attempt. The killers were identified as members of a unit of the Mobile Police Group (GMP), which had played an important role in the December 1974 attempt to overthrow Ramanantsoa by force. The members of the Mobile Police Group, hiding in the Antanimora Camp were forced to surrender to units loyal to the Provisional Military Directorate which had assumed power after Ratsimandrava's assassination.

The Directorate was headed by General Giles Andriamihazo and had 16 other members, including officers from all the armed services and provinces of Madagascar, among them Frigate Captain Didier Ratsiraka, former Chancellor in the Ramanantsoa government.

The Andriamihazo administration placed the individuals accused of the assassination of Ratsimandrava on trial. On May 20, 1975, the Military Directorate announced an amnesty affecting 270 of the 320 defendants. However, this decision did not apply to the main plotters implicated in the case, such as former President Tsiranana, his Minister of the Interior, Andre Rosampa, Colonel Roland Rabetafika, the former Director General of the Government, and the ex-President's military adviser, Col. Brechard Rajaonarison.

Andriamihazo, who had led the country until June 15, 1975, was replaced by Ratsiraka.

On that occasion, the first measures of the economic and social reconstruction of the country were conceived. "The only way of rapid development for Madagascar is that of socialism," declared Captain Didier Ratsiraka, when he assumed the office of Chief of State, Government and Supreme Council of the Revolution.

The process initiated in June 1975 is linked with the birth of the Republic on December 30, 1975. The emergence of the Republic is moreover linked with a fundamental change of enormous historical significance for Madagascar, namely the entry into effect for the first time of a constitution, which had been approved by the people in a referendum held on December 21,1975. More than four million people, that is some 90% of the population, went to the polls to vote for the constitution, for Ratsiraka as President of the Republic, and for a Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution, which embodied a broad programme of socio-economic and political changes.

A whole set of measures was put into effect both before and after the proclamation of the Republic in the economic as well as in the political, social and cultural spheres. Within a few months, events took a rapid course and in 1973 the Franco-Malagasy cooperation agreements were denounced and French troops had to leave the country, while Malagasy diplomacy laid the foundations of a vigorous policy of non-alignment and closer relations with the progressive countries of the Third World and with the socialist community. Moreover, Madagascar abandoned its earlier policy of a dialogue with the racist regime in Pretoria and withdrew from the Afro-Malagasy-Mauritian Common Organization (OCAMM), which since then has been called the Afro-Mauritian Organization. The U.S. satellite tracking station operated by NASA at Imorintsiatosika was also closed—on July 15, 1975--and several hundred U.S. "technical personnel" had to leave the country. Relations were cut with Israel, the Republic of South Africa and the Taiwan regime, and recognition was extended to the Palestine Liberation Organization, to the POLISARIO Front and subsequently to the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic, while support was given to the national liberation movements, including the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe.

The bulwarks of neo-colonial domination—the banks and insurance companies—were nationalized, while the large French corporations — la Marseillaise, Coroi, Mahavavy, Nemakia, Cotona, and Sotema--and a score of other enterprises were either completely nationalized or had to accept major state participation (67% of their capital). On June 26, 1976, the entire complex of petroleum business, from imports of crude petroleum to refining and distribution, was completely taken over by the state.

Independence, sovereignty and harmonious development of the majority of the population are the basic objectives of the economic and financial policy of the Ratsiraka government, which gives priority to agriculture as the foundation of the country's economic development, set by the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution.

This process is inseparable from the agrarian reform which, in turn, is closely tied to agricultural cooperatives. The agrarian reform has been accompanied by collective land distribution through the cooperatives and, in keeping with popular traditions the *fokontany* committees have replaced the earlier rural community councils which were extremely bureaucratic institutions.

The government also raised by 15% the minimum pay, extended from 18 to 30 days the length of paid holidays, and abolished the cattle tax. This last measure was very important under the conditions prevailing in Madagascar, which has about nine million head of the zebu breed of cattle.

On December 30, 1976, the population celebrated as a national holiday the first anniversary of the Malagasy Democratic Republic. On that occasion President Ratsiraka announced in his message to the nation a set of new measures for attaining the objectives stipulated in the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution.

The government decided to nationalize fully the Mahavavy Sugar Company (SOSUMAV) at Ambiolobe in the north of the country and Namakia Sugar Company at Majunga on the west coast, as well as the enterprise controlling the sugar mills at Bricksville in the east and at Mossi-Be in the north-west. Explaining the signficance and scope of these decisions, President Ratsiraka declared: "All the vital sectors of the national economy must be nationalized."

People's Power and the People's National Assembly were instituted in 1977, just as a Military Committee for Development (a paramilitary institution), which plays an important role in the economic development of the country.

At the beginning of 1978, the government had already nationalized 70% of the banks, insurance companies, maritime and overland transport, the petroleum industry and shipbuilding.

According to the Charter of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution, the political programme of the government of President Ratsiraka, the state should own the natural resources and the industrial capacity of the country, and should further the autonomous and balanced development of the national economy under people's control.

The nationalist policy of the country's economic, political and social development is in keeping with the socialist positions held by the government itself, which has strengthened its relations with the socialist countries.

President Ratsiraka visited the Soviet Union in June 1978 at the invitation of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and also toured Rumania, France, Algeria, and Tanzania. Later he visited the Korean People's Democratic Republic.

During his visit to Moscow, he declared that all the schemes of imperialism and its allies in the region notwithstanding, the Malagasy Democratic Republic would continue following the path of its stated policy.

A month before the President's journey, a series of incidents occurred in the Malagassy capital, provoked by anti-government elements striving to slow down the revolutionary process on this strategic island in the Indian Ocean, which has been a key point of interest in imperialist strategy because of its location on the petroleum-supply line leading from the Arabian-Persian Gulf through the Mozambique Channel.

Madagascar is the object of a persistent campaign of intimidation and provocations, including infiltration by enemy agents, violations of its air space and territorial waters, economic sabotage, and dissemination of treacherous rumours.

In November 1980, the Madagascar government had to put a stop to attempts to disorganize the supply of food to the population and created consumer cooperatives.

At the beginning of February 1981, disorders were provoked by individuals tied to the old neo-colonialist regime with the aim of ending the policy of socialist transformation and of restoring the capitalist order. In the face of these attempts, the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution called on the people to strengthen their vigilance against the schemes of internal reaction, instigated by imperialist forces.

Economy: Madagascar is the world's leading producer of vanilla (1,800 tons of dry vanilla) and the world's tenth largest producer of chromium (244,000 tons in 1976). In addition, it is a major African producer of sugar (1,450,000 tons in 1978). Its economically active population was estimated to number 3,334,000 in 1975, of whom 2,657,000 work in agriculture. The island's principal crops (according to 1978 figures) include: 1,981,000 tons of rice, 410,000 tons of castor oil (1977), 35,000 tons of peanuts, 87,000 tons of coffee, 42,000 tons of dry beans, 5,000 tons of copra, 17,000 tons of sisal, 450,000 tons of bananas, 39,000 tons of coconuts, and 2,000 tons of cocoa. According to 1978 FAO figures, livestock production included 9,000,000 head of cattle, 560,000 pigs, and 607,000 sheep. In the subsoil there are undetermined deposits of copper, bauxite, mercury, nickel, iron, chromium, gold, uranium, petroleum, mica and graphite. Planning to raise production and to develop specified sectors of the national economy, the government has put into effect an agrarian reform and nationalization of foreign-owned enterprises. In 1977, Madagascar produced 15,726 tons of graphite and 271,000,000 kWh of electric power.

The island's forests yielded 6,665,000 cu.m of timber in 1977. In the same year, the fish catch was 56,040 tons.

The national currency is the Malagasy franc whose rate of exchange in February 1980 was 203.2 per U.S. dollar. According to World Bank figures, the 1977 gross national product was 1,870 million dollars (the 1978 forecast was 2,050 million dollars) and in per capita terms it amounted to 230 dollars. The foreign exchange reserves of the Democratic Republic of Madagascar in 1978 were 59,200,000 dollars. In the same year its balance of trade showed a deficit of 12,418 million MG francs, resulting from 99,632 million MG francs of imports and 87,214 million MG francs of exports. The Malagasy Democratic Republic imports food, fuels, chemical products, iron, steel, textiles and machinery, and exports meat, live cattle and spices.

The 1977 national budget, which amounted to 549,644,000 dollars, was a provisional one, designed to serve as a basis for the large-scale reforms provided for under a new development plan which began to be implemented in January 1978.

This Socialist Development Plan, which covers the period until the year 2000, has three stages. In the period 1978-1984, the material and cultural foundations of socialist development are to be laid. Between 1985 and 1992, the socialist economy is to be consolidated, and in the period from 1993 to the year 2000, the growth and expansion of the socialist economy are to be accelerated.

Government: The presidential system of government, instituted by the 1959 Constitution, was abolished in 1972, when General Ramanantsoa was granted full powers to govern for a period of five years.

At present, the Supreme Revolutionary Council, which is the ruling body in the state, has 20 members and is headed by the President of the Republic and the Prime Minister. It includes representatives of the political parties which constitute the National Front for the Defence of the Revolution. There is also a cabinet headed by the Prime Minister, which implements state policy according to general directives approved by the President and the Supreme Revolutionary Council. The Military Committee for Development associtees high officers, subaltern officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers. It is a consultative body which plays an important role in the involvement of the armed forces in the realization of the country's social and production tasks. The High Constitutional Court is the supreme judicial authority. President Didier Ratsiraka heads the Supreme Revolutionary Council and is also Secretary-General of the National Front for the Defence of the Malagasy Socialist Revolution and of the ruling VAREMA party (Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution).

Armed forces: In October 1975, the government formed the People's Armed Forces in keeping with a programme of transformation of the national institutions. The official decree providing in its first article for the establishment of this force underlined the necessity of integrating the army, the air force, the navy, and public service.

The navy and the air force were merged on January 10, 1976. This move was a part of the government decision to reconstruct the People's Armed Forces.

In March 1976, Ratsiraka announced the formation of a National Revolutionary Service which is compulsory for all youth. The purpose of this measure is to strengthen cooperation between the army and the people through an interchange of knowledge and work with the *fokontany*, the traditional peasant communities.

Organizations: The constitution provided for the formation of a National Front for the Defence of the Revolution. The Front includes the VAREMA (Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution) which has more than 30,000 local cells throughout the island and whose Executive Bureau is headed by Didier Ratsiraka as General Secretary and has as its members other prominent Malagasy personalities. Other members of the Front are the AKFN (the Congress Party for the Independence of Madagascar), the V.S. MONIMA (the National Movement for the Independence of Madagascar), the MFM (the Proletarian Power Party), the UDECMA (the Union of Christian Democrats), and the Vonjy, which associates the old members of ex-President Tsirana's Social Democratic Party.

Culture and education: Qualitative changes have taken place in the spheres of education and culture with the formation of a Ministry of Culture and Revolutionary Art. Earlier, that is prior to 1976, there was only a Ministry of Education. At the end of that year, a Ministry of Higher Education and a Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education were established.

Primary education, the system of which was completely changed, includes five years of instruction and is free and compulsory under a Presidential Decree. The provision of school education to the largest number of children in the shortest possible time involved a tremendous effort in both human and material terms.

More than 1,200,000 children attend primary schools, which represents a 60.4% rate of school attendance (49% in 1975). A rapid expansion of secondary education has also taken place. At present there are 220 secondary schools in the country, compared with 100 in 1967. In 1979, there were more than 18,000 university students in Madagascar, and five new insitutions of higher learning have been established, so that there is a total of six of them in the country now. A nationwide literacy campaign was launched in order to reduce the country's illiteracy rate which according to UNESCO figures was 66.5% in 1976.

According to the orientation of the Ratsiraka government, education should contribute to the formation of militant individuals dedicated to socialist construction.

Public health: The situation in the field of public health has remarkably improved in the Democratic Republic of Madagascar since the launching of the nationalist programme. The provinces of Atananarivo and Diego Suarez have been traditionally most favourably treated in this respect because while in the rest of the country there was one hospital bed for every 449 inhabitants, in the two provinces this proportion dropped to one hospital bed for every twenty inhabitants.

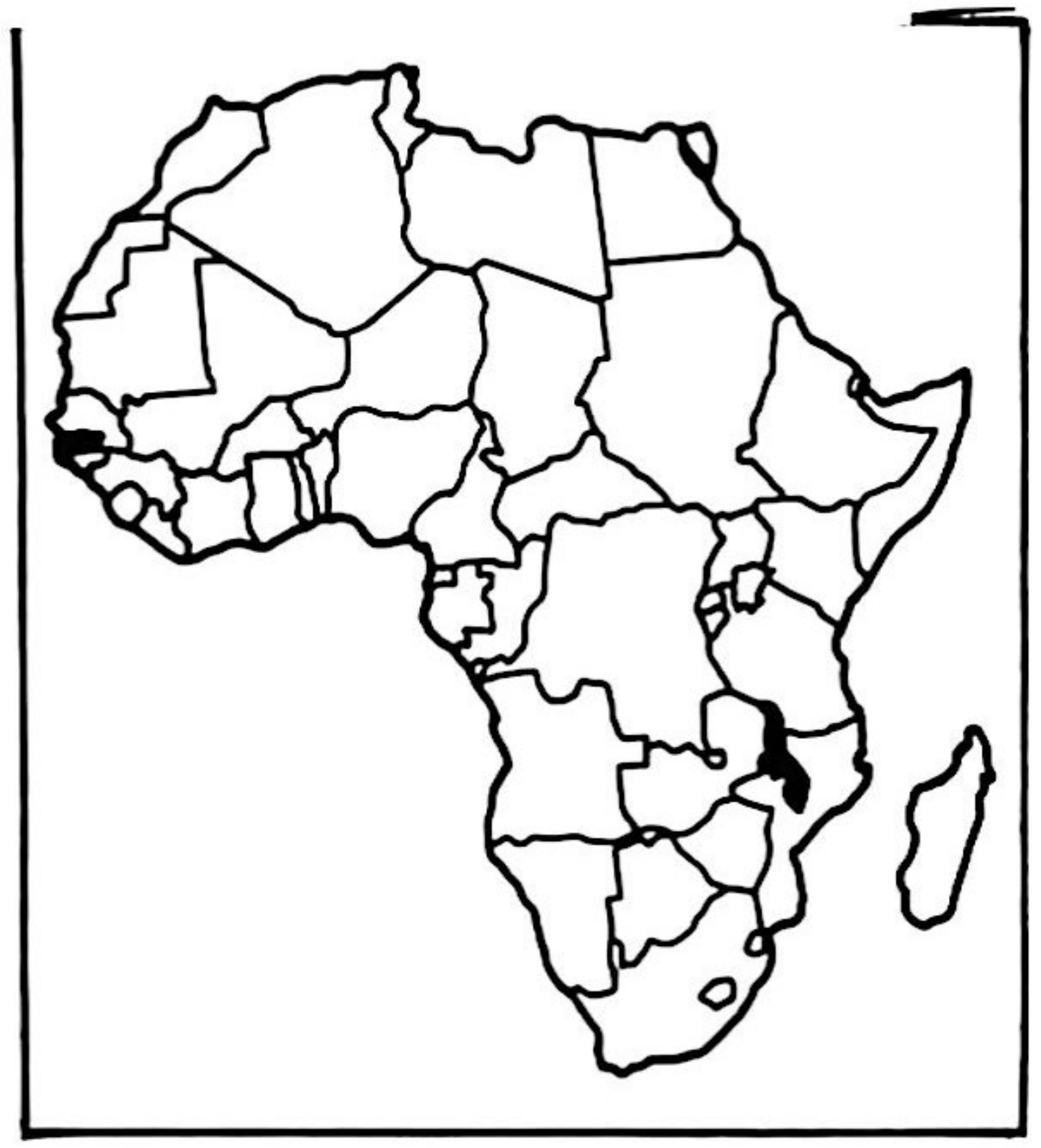
The government has greatly increased investments in the public health sector, spending 3,500 million MG francs for that purpose in 1977.

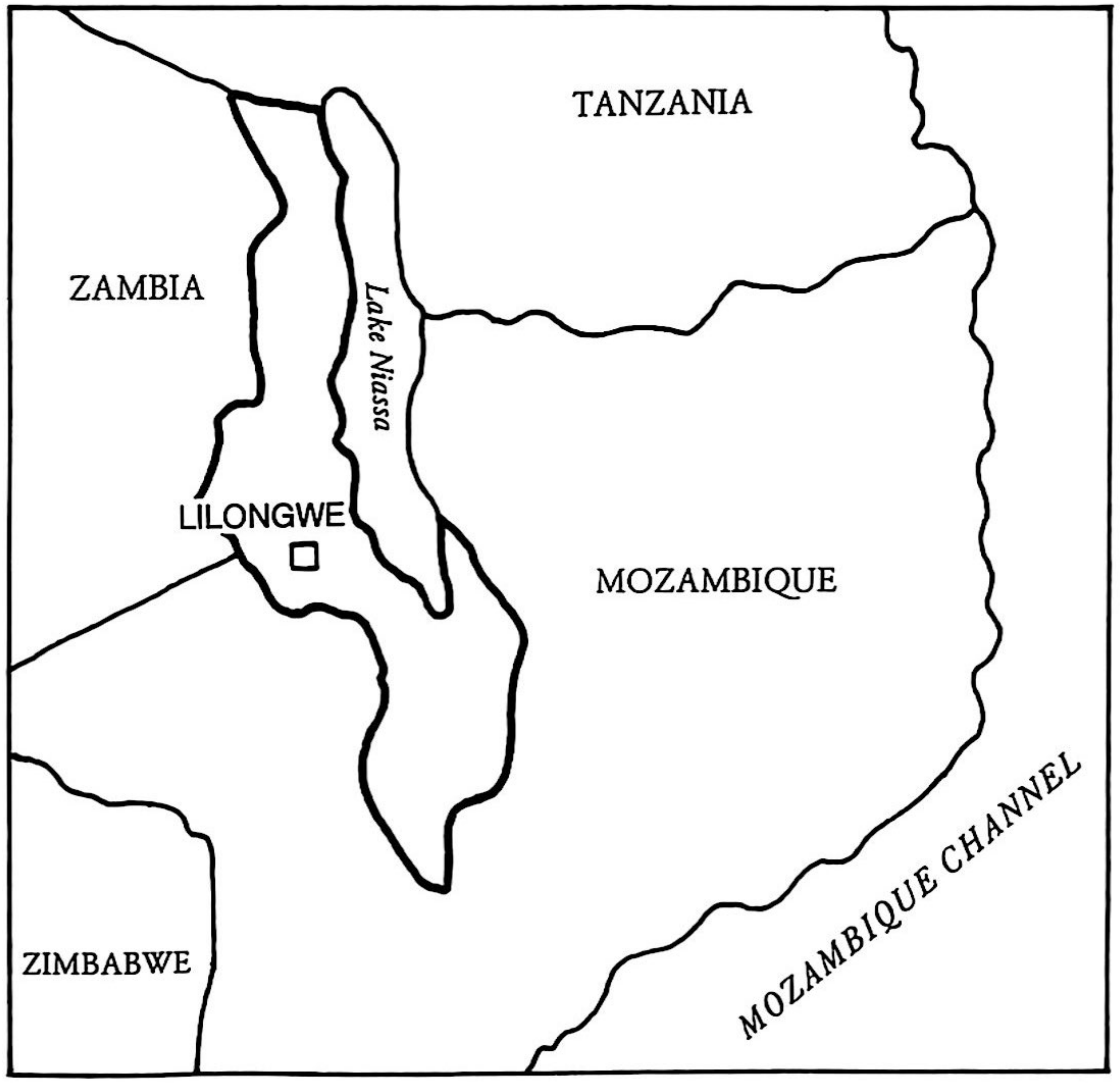
According to existing information, there are already more than 1,000 hosptials or first-aid stations now in the country with a capacity of 19,781 beds. What is, however, more important is that fact that most of the hospitals recently established have been built in rural areas, far from the cities, which has extended medical care to the farming population who had never before enjoyed it.

On the smallest islands, too, facilities have been established for transporting patients to the nearest medical centre where they can receive adequate treatment. A preventive public health campaign was carried out throughout the country as a part of the government programme in this field.

Religion: 34% of the population are Christians, 5% are Moslems, and the rest adhere to traditional animist cults.

MALAWI




TANZANIA
ZAMBIA
Lake Niassa
LILONGWE
MOZAMBIQUE
ZIMBABWE
MOZAMBIQUE CHANNEL

Official name: The Republic of Malawi.
Area: 118,484 sq.km.
Population: 5,900,000 (1980). Principal ethnic groups: Cheva, Nyanja, Yao, Tonga, Ngoni, Lomwe, Tumbuka, Sena, and Ngonde. The annual rate of population growth was 2.5% in the period 1970-1974.
Borders: In the west Malawi borders on Zambia, in the south and east on Mozambique, and in the north on Tanzania.
Capital: Lilongwe. It was inaugurated in 1975 and in 1978 had 103,000 inhabitants.
Principal cities: Blantyre, Zomba, and Mzuru.
Languages: English is the official language. A large part of the population speaks Chichewa.
Public holidays: July 6, Day of the Republic (1966).
Geography: The territory of this landlocked East African country is covered mostly by mountain ranges separated by fertile valleys. The highest point in the country is Mt. Mlanje in the extreme southwest, which rises to an altitude of 2,992 m. Other prominent peaks are Mt. Nkonde, Mt. Nyika, and Mt. Angoniland.

Cutting through Malawi is a deep depression which is an extension of the Great Rift Valley. Most of it is filled by Lake Nyasa (30,800 sq.km), the third largest lake in Africa, which covers one sixth of the whole country.

Lake Nyasa, lying 471 m above sea level, which gave the country its name before independence, is fed by a number of rivers originating in the mountains. The most important are the Rukuru (200 km) and the Bua (180 km); the Shire flows from the lake to the south where it empties into the Zambezi.

Lake Nyasa has good ports and sandy beaches but suffers from sudden and violent storms. On the lake lies Likoma Island. Lakes Chiuta, Chilwa and Malombe all lie in the south. One fifth of Malawi territory is forest-covered, but the forests have no value for timber production, just as the bush and the savannah are not exploited.

The subtropical climate is varied. It is hot in the valley of the Shire, where the temperature rises to 29°C in October and November, moderate in the high-lying areas, and very humid on the shores of Lake Nyasa, where the temperature, however, does not exceed an average of 21°C.

The dry season lasts from May to September, while the rains prevail from October to March. The average annual rainfall is 1,270 mm in the mountains and 889 mm in the lowlands.

Brief history: The Portuguese explorer Gaspar Boccaro was the first European to visit the territory of what is today Malawi in 1616 and was later followed by Jesuit missionaries.

On September 16, 1859, the Scotsman David Livingstone discovered Lake Nyasa and established contact with the Yao tribe living in that area. At that time, too, several attempts to establish missions there failed in spite of the support given them by the colonial authorities.

Great Britain began her penetration of the interior through the African Lakes Company established by Cecil Rhodes, the English colonialist, which succeeded by deceit and bribery in making the tribal chieftains cede those lands to it.

Britain acquired the rights to the territory from the South Africa Company and consolidated her domain through agreements concluded with Germany in 1890 and with the Portuguese in 1891. In the latter year, the Protectorate of Nyasaland was proclaimed.

Then followed an era of colonial exploitation, the best land was forcibly seized from the indigenous population, the British Governor held supreme power, and the white officials and colonists dominated the economic and political life of the country.

The British consolidated their colonization process when in 1897 their forces, including artillery, crushed the resistance of the Yao and Angoni tribes, and of ethnic Arabs, the ancient inhabitants of the region.

During World War I, the territory of Malawi was the scene of clashes between the British and the Germans. It served as an operational base against the so-called German East Africa, and the first spark of independence, struck under the leadership of John Chilembwe in 1915, was suppressed by the colonial forces.

After the war, the colonialists wanted to unite Nyasaland with Tanganyika and then Kenya, but the project failed. New moves were then initiated to join the country with Northern Rhodesia (today's Zambia) and Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), but this project was shelved when World War II broke out, in which 30,000 Nyasaland natives fought on battlefields in Ethiopia, Madagascar and Burma.

Finally, on August 1, 1953, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland was formed with the objective of facilitating British rule in the area. This form of rule permitted the British to control the copper of Northern Rhodesia and the plantations of Southern Rhodesia, to which was now added the cheap labour of Nyasaland.

It should also be added that the Federation made it possible for the colonialists to crush any independence insurgency in Nyasaland with the same forces they had stationed in the two Rhodesias.

However, in spite of the repression and the tight control maintained by the British colonialists, the struggle waged by the people forced the authorities to accept greater African representation in the Advisory Council (five instead of three) and to hold elections in April 1956, which were won by the African National Congress Party, the first native political organization in the country, which had been founded in 1944 and which was led by Hastings Kamuzu Banda, Malawi's present-day President for Life.

After a number of rebellions and subsequent periods of calm, the Congress Party of Malawi won 99% of the vote and 22 of the 28 seats in the new Parliament elected on August 15, 1961.

A year later, the London Conference, which met on November 12, 1962, approved a new Constitution and internal autonomy for the country—set for February 10, 1963—and Hastings Kamuzu Banda assumed the office of Prime Minister. When independence was proclaimed on July 6, 1964, Banda became the Head of the Government of Malawi.

Inside the country Banda was accused of having launched fierce repression of the opposition parties, banned all statements against the government, and assumed control of all political activity, which has provoked many popular uprisings.

In September 1964, six prominent cabinet ministers were sacked when they tried to sharpen the anti-colonialist position of the government and opposed the occupation of key posts in the country by white colonists. A true civil war broke out under the leadership of the former ministers, Harry Chipembere, Kanyama Chiume, Orton Chirwa, Yakuta Siziza and others, who had found refuge in the Mangoche hills east of Lake Malawi (Nyasa) and who carried out a successful attack against Fort Johnston in February 1965. Banda restored his control of the country with brute force and in July 1966 was elected President of the new Republic. Nevertheless, in October 1967, Chiziza organized another guerilla group, but Banda counter-attacked and executed his former Minister of the Interior and other resistance leaders.

Banda adopted a policy favourable to South Africa and in 1965 refused to join the Organization of African Unity—the OAU—in condemning apartheid. At the same time he strengthened his cooperation with Pretoria. The recruitment of Malawi workers for South Africa became even more intensive than it had been under colonial rule and in 1972 reached the figure of 124,000. South Africa financed the construction of Malawi's new capital, Lilongwe, and has systematically helped Banda fight his opponents. The President of Malawi did not conceal his assistance to the Portuguese colonialists in Mozambique and to the racists in Southern Rhodesia.

In 1977, the victory of FRELIMO and the nationalist advances in Zimbabwe forced Banda to try and improve his very tense relations with the neighbouring countries, including Zambia and Tanzania, and to make some concessions inside his own country, such as the holding of elections in 1978—after 17 years—or the release of political prisoners.

On September 11 and 12, 1980, the Ministers of Transport of Malawi, Mozambique, Zaire, Zambia and Zimbabwe met in Blantyre to coordinate regional development plans.

Economy: Farming is pursued on 2,895,000 hectares of the total arable area of 9,408,000 hectares by 88% of the economically active population, which in 1970 was estimated to number 2,014,000 persons. According to FAO estimates, they produce 174,000 metric tons of peanuts, 30,000 tons of tea, 53,000 tons of tobacco leaf, 1,250,000 tons of maize, and 105,000 tons of sorghum. There are 596,000 head of cattle, 120,000 sheep, 620,000 goats, 180,000 pigs, and 7,500,000 poultry. The forests yielded 4,451,000 cu.m of timber in 1973, in which year 25,600 tons of fresh-water fish were netted. The little industry there is, is owned by British and South African capital and produced 94,080 tons of cement and 276,000,000 kWh of electricty in 1977. The mining industry is weak and is also owned by British and South African capital.

According to the last available data, Malawi's gross national product in 1979 was shared by agriculture (45%), industry (22%) and the service industry (33%); its value was reported to have risen 6.4% and in absolute terms amounted to some 183 U.S. dollars per capita. Malawi's imports in 1978 stood at 344 million dollars, while its exports amounted only to 183 million. 47% of the export value was accounted for by tobacco. The 1976 national budget closed with a deficit of 32,212,487 dollars, and the 1977 cost of living index was 171 points above the 1970 level. The nation's foreign debt was 240,800,000 dollars in 1975.

The national currency is the kwacha and its rate of exchange in 1978 was 0.867 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The executive power is vested in the President of the Republic (for life) who holds at the same time the portfolios of Prime Minister and the Ministers of Justice, National Defence and Foreign Affairs.

Armed forces: Malawi has about 2,500 men in its armed forces and gendarmerie.

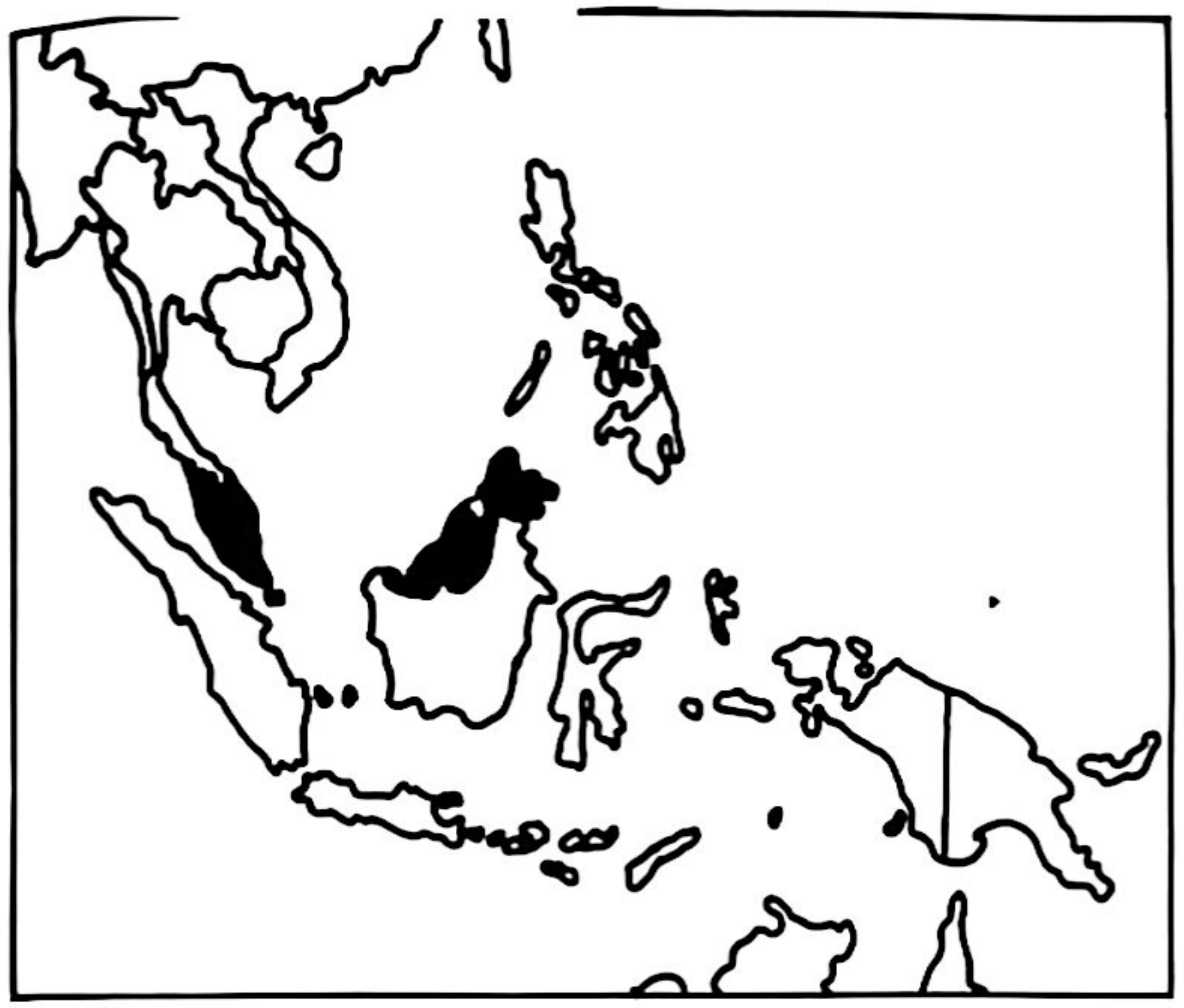
Organizations: The only permitted political party in the country is the Congress Party of Malawi, founded in 1959 and in power since 1964.

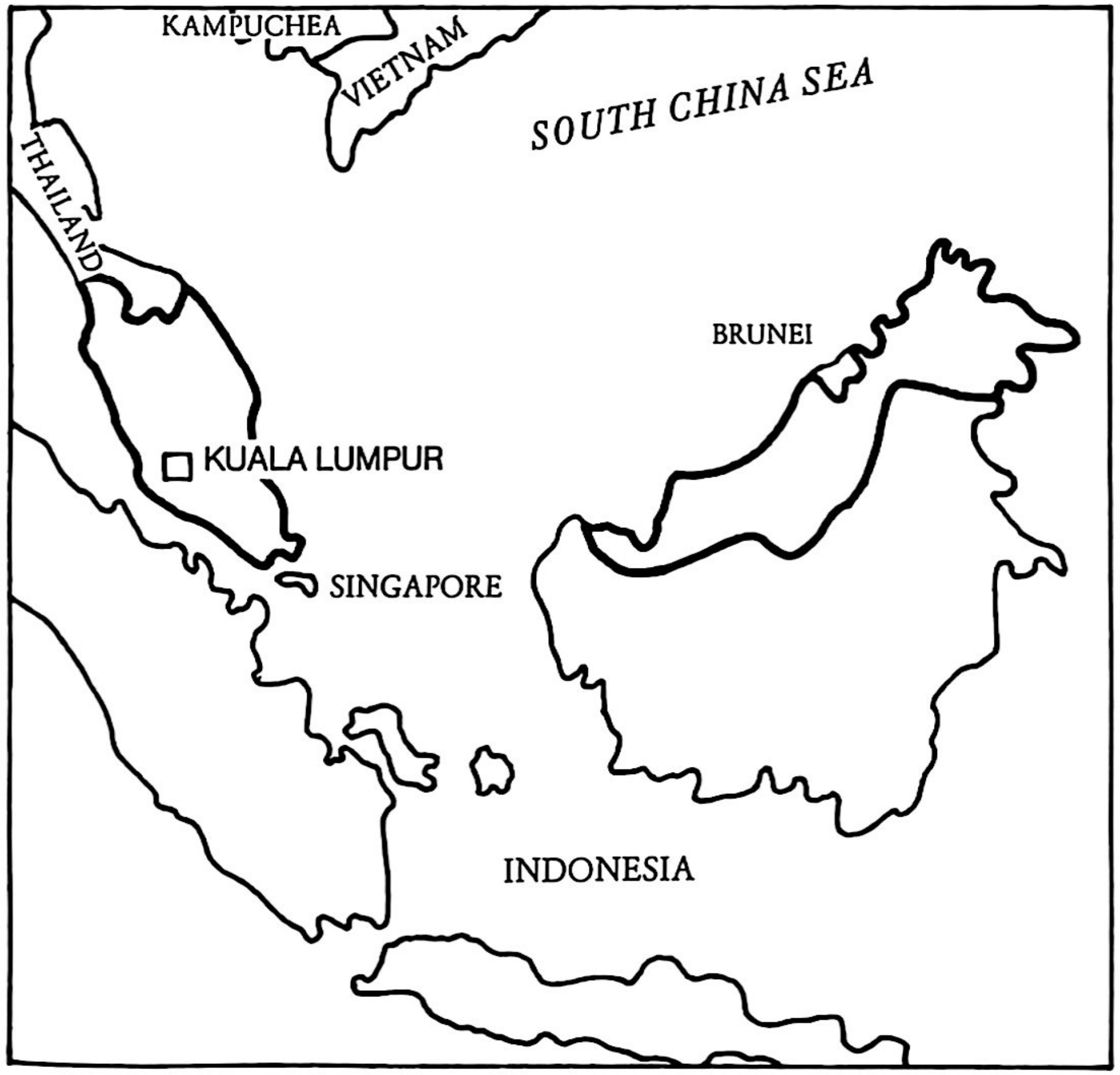
Education: 75% of the population is illiterate. In 1970, there were 355,004 pupils in primary schools, 11,727 students in secondary schools, and 929 students pursued higher education. In 1971, there were 18,000 primary and 58 secondary schools in the country. There is one university with five faculties, which was opened in 1965. Instruction is supervised by the Ministry of Education.

Public health: There are 147 hospitals with 6,951 beds (1972). In 1971, there were 115 doctors, 10 dentists and 484 nurses in Malawi.

Religion: Half of the population are Christians, 30% are Moslems, and the rest of the people are followers of animist cults.

MALAYSIA





Official name: Malaysia.
Area: 329,749 sq.km.
Borders: In the north it borders on Thailand, in the south on the Bahru Straits, in the west on the Malacca Straits, and in the east on the South China Sea.
Capital: Kuala Lumpur (1,000,000 inhabitants).
Population: 13,297,000 (in 1979). Annual rate of population growth was 3% in the period 1970-1974.
Principal cities: Penang, Ipoh, Johore Bahru and Klang.
Languages: Malay, Tamil, Chinese and English.
Public holidays: August 31, Anniversary of the Declaration of Sovereignty of Malaysia (1957).
Geography: Malaysia is formed by a part of the Malay Peninsula and the northern part of Kalimantan—the states of Sarawak and Sabah.

The peninsular part covers an area of 131,588 sq.km, Sarawak measures 124,450 sq.km, and Sabah 73,711 sq.km.

The peninsular territory of Malaysia consists of two coastal plains separated in the centre by mountain ranges which rise to a height of 2,218 m. Flowing down the mountains are numerous rivers, which form two watersheds—one eastern, the other western. The principal rivers are the Perak in the west and the Kelantan and the Pahang in the east. In the past, these streams used to be the only lines of communication in the country.

Much of the territory is covered with jungles and swamps, but rice, tea, coconuts and other minor crops are grown on the higher lying land. Rubber is the main agricultural product, while below the ground there are large deposits of tin. These two items account for 70% of Malaysia's exports. Other products include copra, coconut oil and palm oil.

The country is divided into 13 States: Johore, Kedah, Kelantan, Malacca, Negri Sembilan, Pahang, Penang, Perak, Perlis, Sabah, Sarawak, Selangor, and Trengganu.

The island of Kalimantan lies some 640 km east of the Malay Peninsula. The States of Sarawak and Sabah occupy the north of the island together with the Sultanate of Brunei, which is a British protectorate. The rest of Kalimantan is a part of the Republic of Indonesia.

Sarawak and Sabah are almost entirely covered with jungle and in the coastal area with swamps. In the interior there are mountain ranges, from which spring many rivers serving as the main lines of communications.

There is plenty of rainfall and the rainy season comes between October and March in the west of the peninsula and in Kalimantan.

Brief history: From the 2nd to the 19th centuries A.D., the territory of what is today Malaysia was a part of the Buddhist realms of Langkasura, Sriwijaya and Majapahit successively.

When the island which today forms Singapore at the southern tip of the Peninsula of Malacca fell under Majapahit rule, one of its princes fled to the continent and there founded the city of Malacca on the southwestern coast. Subsequently, the city became the first Malay kingdom under Siamese (Thai) suzerainty.

In the 15th century, the Kingdom of Malacca enjoyed a period of splendour and gave its name both to the peninsula and to the straits separating it from Sumatra. At that time, too, the area was converted to Islam.

Portuguese navigators reached Malacca in 1511 and, although they had established their commercial bases there, they could not conquer the Sultanate. The Dutch dislodged the Portuguese in 1641 and began exploiting the natives from fortified bases established along the coast.

During the Napoleonic wars, Britain seized Malacca in 1795 and launched an expansion of her dominion to the detriment of the Dutch who agreed in 1824 to cede to her the Malay area in exchange for the island of Sumatra. The British colonies in the area—Singapore, Penang, Malacca and the province of Wellesley—were associated under the name of the Straits Settlements and were controlled by the East India Company until 1867, when they came under the direct rule of the British Crown.

In 1841 and 1878 respectively, Britain acquired by treaties concluded with the local chieftains the territories of Sarawak and Sabah, situated west and east of the small Moslem kingdom of Brunei on the northern coast of Kalimantan.

Beginning in 1878, the British gradually expanded their territory on the Malay Peninsula. In 1896, the Federated Malay States were constituted from Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang under the administration of a British Resident.

In 1909, Siam relinquished its authority over Perlis, Kelantan, Trengganu and Kedah, which then became the Non-Federated Malay States governed by a British Counsellor. Later, the city of Johore signed a Treaty of Protection with Britain.

In 1941 came the Japanese occupation which ended in 1945 with the defeat of the Axis powers. The colonial troops returned in the same year and in 1948 the Federation of Malaya was formed of nine States and the two Settlements on the peninsula, Malacca and Penang.

However, the guerilla struggle during the Japanese occupation had given rise to popular discontent with any foreign domination, and that very same year a war against British colonialism broke out. The Malay guerillas fought 12 years for their country's independence. In order to combat them, Great Britain sent in troops from the metropolis as well as from her colonial strongholds in Asia and Africa. The population was interned in concentration camps and an emergency law was imposed, which was in force until 1960.

In order to avoid an extension of the armed struggle, Great Britain granted the country some political freedoms, but at the same time strengthened her military and economic control. On August 31, 1957, the sovereignty of the Federation of Malaya was proclaimed within the framework of the British Commonwealth of Nations and the colonial authorities turned over the government to the Party of the Malacca Alliance, composed of pro-imperialist, bourgeois elements and large landowners.

Nevertheless, the internal conflict did not cease. In the attempt to rally her forces and to consolidate the influence of the pro-imperialist elements in the area, Britain proposed the establishment of a Federation of Malaysia, which would associate the states on the Malay Peninsula, the island of Singapore and the British possessions in northern Kalimantan.

The project was opposed by the popular political parties and the progressive trade unions. The authorities resorted to repression, imprisoned the opposition leaders, and on September 16, 1963, the Federation of Malaysia was established from the aforesaid states.

The formation of Malaysia had the support of all the neo-colonialist forces in the world. It was of major importance for the British because it permitted them to preserve their chain of bases in Southeast Asia and one of the centres of their monopoly interests in the region.

Differences between the Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnic groups and their divergent economic positions made the Federation hold together from its very inception only by the force of the British troops concentrated in the area. Those troops, in turn, were pointed against Indonesia which, as a matter of principle was opposed to the formation of Malaysia.

Washington supported the Federation and unsuccessfully tried to involve it in SEATO.

Internally, the member-states of the Federation of Malaysia continued to depend on an economy based on agriculture and mining. The internal divergencies led to a major split, when Singapore decided on Aguust 9, 1965, to proclaim its independence and leave the Federation.

In that period, the guerilla movement reached a new peak and in 1977, the forces led by the clandestine Communist Party of Malaysia had more than 5,000 men.

In 1966, Malaysia and Indonesia normalized their relations and thereby put an end to three years of tension and clashes.

The current Premier, Datuk Hussein bin Onn, who assumed his office after the death of his predecessor, Tun Abdul Razak, in 1976, retained his post for another five years having won the 1978 elections.

Malaysia, which has been associated with the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries since 1967, pursues a policy of neutrality and non-alignment. At present it favours the formation of a zone of neutrality by the countries forming the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, of which it is a member. Within ASEAN, it has pursued a contradictory policy with regard to Chinese expansionist ambitions in the area which Peking claims in its textbooks to be "historical Chinese territory".

However, at international forums, Malaysia has been voting in favour of the deposed pro-Chinese regime of Pol Pot in Kampuchea and is criticizing Vietnam's assistance to Phnom Penh, thus pursuing the policy adopted by ASEAN.

Economy: Malaysia's economy is based on agriculture and mining, specifically on the production of rubber and tin, where it holds one of the leading places in the world. In 1978, its output of tin concentrate was 62,650 metric tons of iron ore 320,034 tons, and of bauxite 615,060 tons. In the same year it produced 1,530,146 tons of rubber, 2,993,054 kg of tea, and 1,640,044 tons of palm oil.

Gross national product (GNP) was 14,940 million dollars in 1978, which means 1,090 dollars per capita.

The national budget for 1978-1979 provided for 8,709 million dollars of expenditures and 9,049 million dollars of income. Malaysia's foreign-exchange reserves in the same fiscal year stood at 3,330 million US dollars, 86 million dollars of which were in the form of gold.

The national currency is the ringgit.

In 1978, Malaysia's foreign trade—conducted mainly with the United States, Japan and Singapore—amounted to 30,784 million ringgits. Exports were valued at 17,094 and imports at 13,690 million ringgits, i.e. 8,059 and 6,508 million US dollars respectively, producing a surplus of 1,551 million dollars in the Federation's balance of trade.

Government: The government of Malaysia performs the duties of a federal government for all of Malaysia. The member states have their own constitutions and their own parliaments.

The federal government is headed by a King elected for a term of five years by the heads of the royal Malay dynasties. The King appoints a Prime Minister who then advises him on the appointment of the other cabinet members. In 1979, Haji Ahmad Shah was designated as Head of State.

The Federal Parliament consists of the Dewan Negara (Senate) and the Dewan Rakyat (House of Representatives). The Senate has 58 members of whom 26 are elected by the legislative assemblies of the states making up the Federation, and 32 are appointed by the King. The Dewan Rakyat has 154 members—114 from Malaysia, 24 from Sarawak, and 16 from Sabah.

Armed forces: In 1980 the Malaysian armed forces had 66,000 men—54,000 in the army, 6,000 in the navy, and 6,000 in the air force. Paramilitary forces had 213,000 men. The 1980 military budget was 2,960 million ringgits.

Organizations: The Party of the Malacca Alliance is the government party and represents the interests of the big landlords and the bourgeoisie; its main components are the United Malay National Organizations (UMNO), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA), and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC).

The opposition political parties are the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, the Geraken Rakyat, and the Labour Party, associated in the Socialist Front. There are also the People's Progressive Party, the People's Convention Party, and the United Democratic Party. The Communist Party of Malaysia, founded in 1930, is outlawed and therefore operates underground.

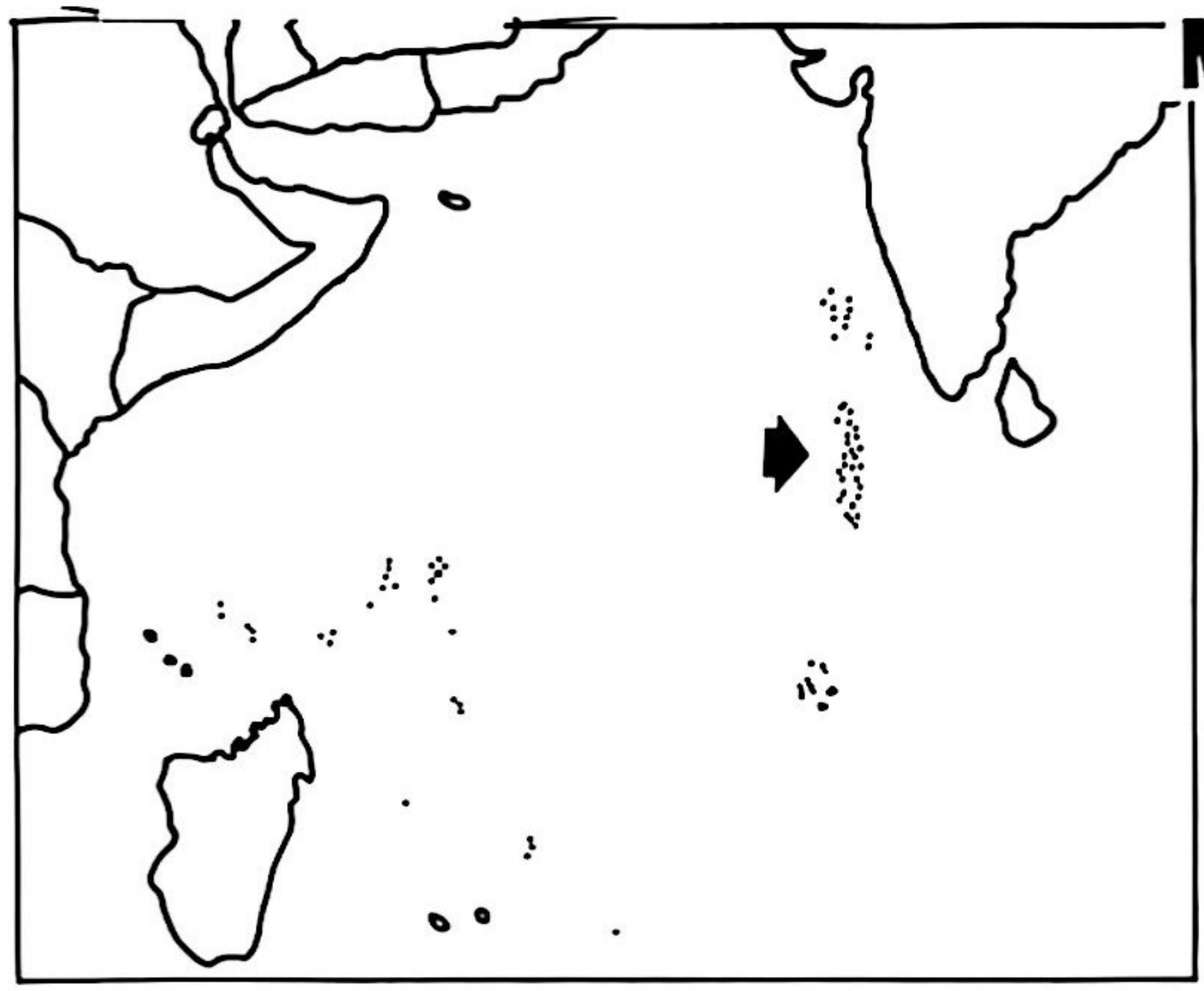
Education: School attendance is not obligatory in Malaysia, and illiteracy stands at 55%. In 1977, there were 7,600 primary and secondary schools with a total of 2,536,624 students and with classes given in Malay, Chinese, Hindi, and English. There were also 56 vocational and trade schools and five universities with 17,472 students.

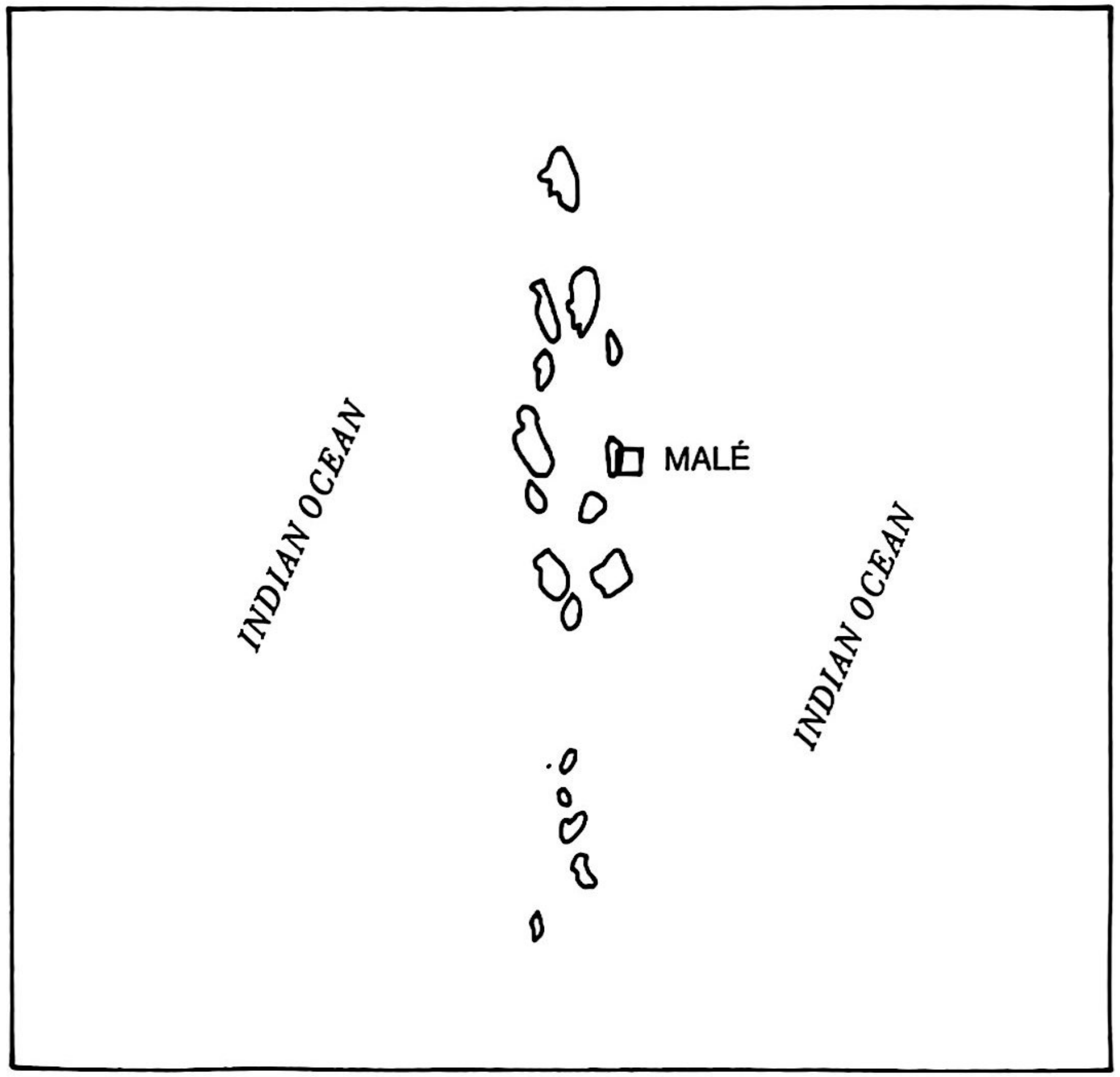
In 1979, there were 857,546 television and 315,588 radio sets in the country. Colour television transmissions began in 1978. In 1975, 31 periodicals were published with a total edition of 1,038,000 copies.

Public health: In 1974, there were 245 hospitals with 34,560 beds, 2,054 doctors, 442 dentists, and 6,316 nurses. There is one doctor per 43,000 inhabitants. In 1976, the birth rate was 32.1 per 1,000 inhabitants.

Religion: The majority of the population are Moslems. The Chinese community (36%) are Taoists and Buddhists, while the Indian community (17%) are Hindus. There are some Christians, and in Sabah and Sarawak the native communities practice animist cults.

MALDIVES




INDIAN OCEAN
MALÉ
INDIAN OCEAN

Official name: The Republic of Maldives
Area: 298 sq.km.
Borders: The Republic of Maldives is an archipelago of close to 1,200 tiny coral islands, located in the northwestern part of the Indian Ocean, some 650 km southwest of the southern tip of India and Sri Lanka.
Population: 146,000 (1979 estimate). Annual rate of population growth is 3.8%. The inhabitants are the descendants of Indians, Sinhalese and Arabs.
Capital: Male.
Languages: Divehi is the official language. English and Arabic are also spoken.
Public holidays: July 26, Anniversary of Liberation, (1965).
Geography: The elevation above sea level of the close to 1,200 coral islands and islets which make up the archipelago does not exceed six metres. Except for the great abundance of coconut trees, the tropical vegetation is scarce. There are no streams. The archipelago is 870 km long and 80 km wide, and lies close to the Equator.

The climate is tropical and is affected by monsoons, but it is softened by sea breezes.

The principal port is located on the island of Male which is also the capital of the Republic.

There are no mineral deposits or energy resources.

Brief history: The first inhabitants of the islands are believed to have come from Sri Lanka in about 500 B.C. However, Maldivian historiography begins in 1253 with the arrival of the Moroccan Barakatul Barbari who converted the population to Islam. In 1558, the Portuguese landed on the Maldives and dominated the islands until 1573, when they were driven out by the local population. The Dutch, who had forced out the Portuguese from Sri Lanka, extended their rule to the Maldives as well.

Still later, the British replaced the Dutch and in 1887 succeeded in making the local sultan sign an agreement formally accepting British rule, and the archipelago became a British protectorate.

The strategic position of the islands midway between Aden and Singapore was exploited by the British for building a naval base there. Later, they also built an air base on Gan Atoll.

After Sri Lanka had won independence in 1948, London imposed on the Maldivians an agreement under which Great Britian continued exercising control over the external relations and defence of the islands, while recognizing their internal autonomy.

A reform movement tried to abolish the sultanate in 1953 by proclaiming a Republic, but reactionary forces succeeded in restoring the sultan to power a year later.

British intentions to enlarge and modernize the air base on Gan ran into popular opposition and the people demanded total independence. After having suppressed the upheaval and protests, the British authorities forced on the Maldivians the cession of Gan Atoll in 1960 for a period of 30 years and for the purpose of maintaining the British air base there.

Eight years later, the progressive forces on the islands succeded in a referendum to replace the sultanate with a republican form of government with a President and a Parliament, and thus the Republic of Maldives came into being on November 11, 1968.

Ibrahim Nasir, who had conducted the negotiations with the British, was elected President of the Republic and stayed in office until November 11, 1978, when he retired because of advanced age and poor health. The President now in office, Maumoon Abdul Gaium, who had held the post of Minister of Transport in the Nasir cabinet, was inaugurated on November 11, 1978.

In 1975, the Maldivian government obtained the return of Gan Atoll and in 1976 the withdrawal of the British forces from the military base located there.

In 1976, in the course of the Fifth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries, the Republic of Maldives joined the non-aligned movement. Isolated in the middle of the Indian Ocean, the Republic of Maldives is one of the smallest member-states of the United Nations and the smallest Moslem state.

However, its long tradition of struggle against colonial aggression and exploitation has made this small country play a distinguished role in the international arena, and it enjoys great prestige in the non-aligned movement.

In recent years, the Maldives have developed fruitful relations of economic, scientific and technical cooperation with many countries, including the socialist states.

The leaders of the Republic of Maldives have shown their interest in regional cooperation, in particular within the framework of the non-aligned movement.

The Maldives are resolutely opposed to the existence of military bases in the Indian Ocean and view the U.S. base on Diego Garcia island as a threat to the independence and sovereignty of all the states in that particular part of the world. For this reason, they support the proposal to turn the Indian Ocean into a zone of peace.

Economy: The Maldivian economy is based mainly on the export of bonito and tunny fish, copra, and coconut oil. In 1976, the gross national product amounted to 12 million U.S. dollars, i.e. 120 dollars per capita. The official currency is the Maldivian rupee.

The 1977 national budget showed an income of 24 million rupees and expenditures of 30 million rupees, and ended with a deficit of 6 million rupees. In the same year, foreign trade reported imports worth 35.8 million rupees, and exports of 13.1 million, which left a balance of trade deficit of 22.6 million rupees.

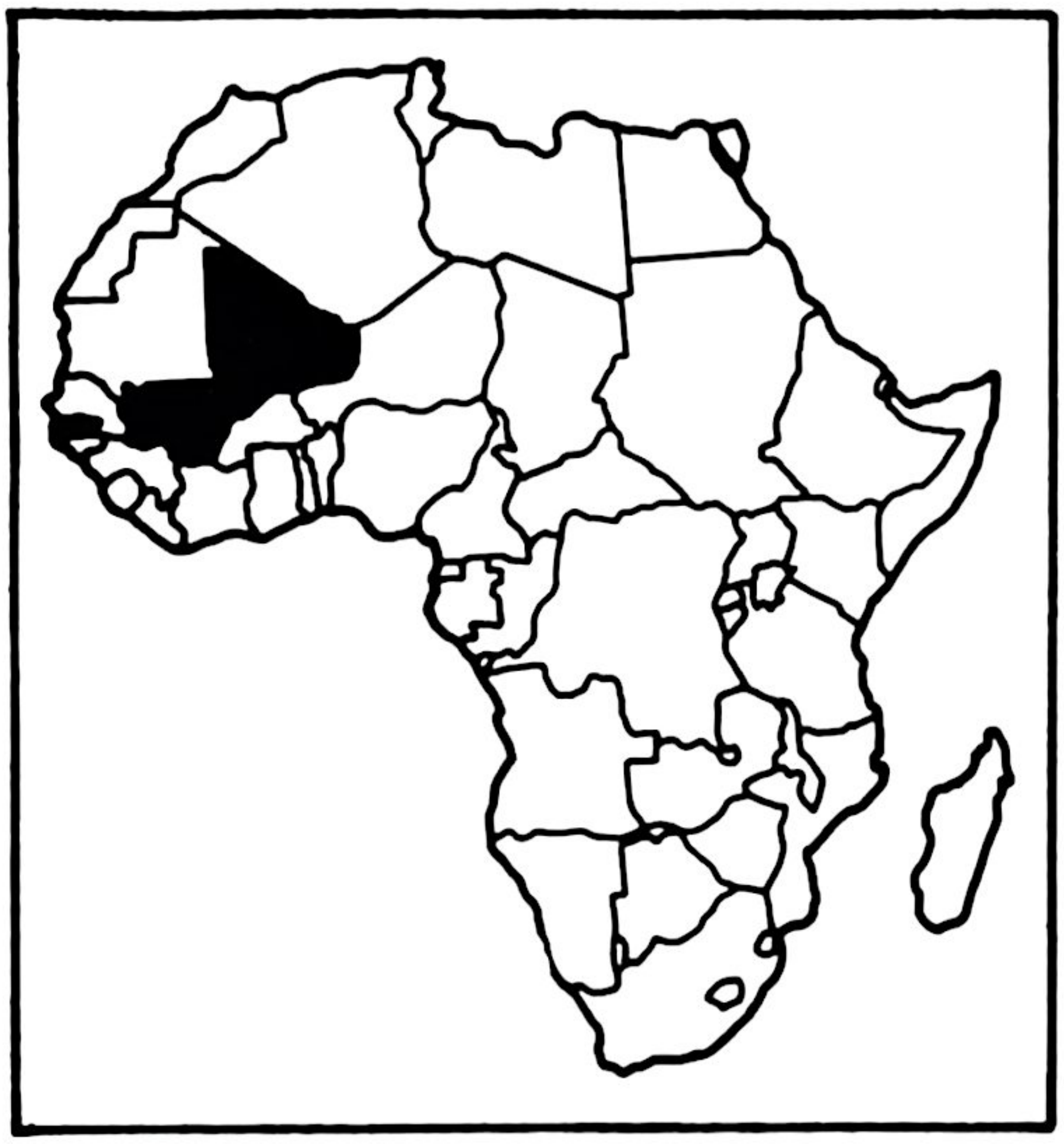
Government: It is made up of a President, a Council of Ministers, and a Parliament.

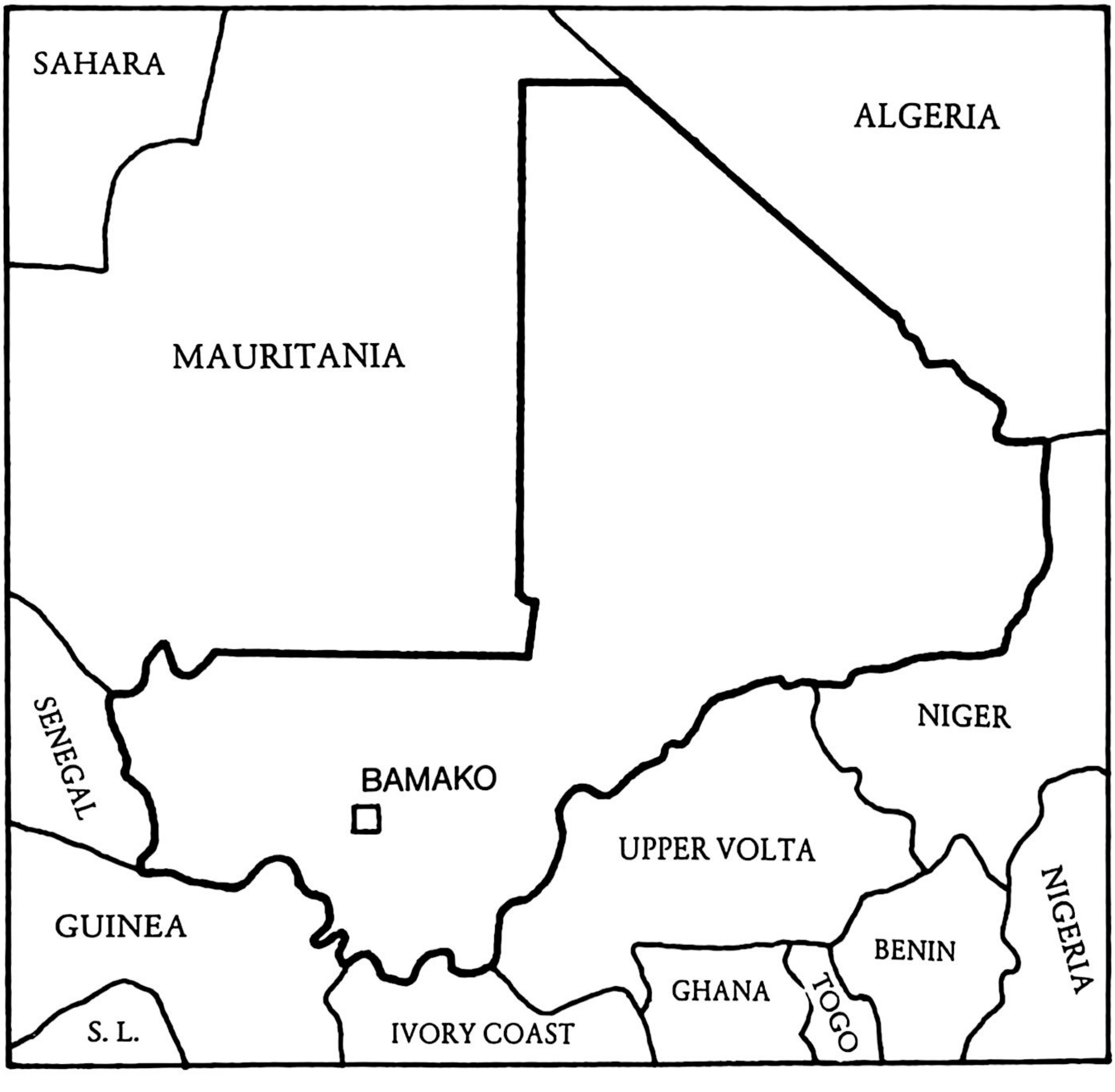
The President is elected by popular vote for a term of five years. He appoints the members of the Cabinet, who are accountable to the Parliament which is unicameral and has 48 members. Eight of them are nominated by the President and 40 are elected by popular vote for a term of five years. Each of the 19 atolls, into which the Republic is administratively divided, elects two members, and two are elected in the capital of Male.

Each of the 19 atolls also has an elected local committee, whose chairman is appointed by the central government.

Organizations: There are no political parties.
Education: In 1978, there were 64 primary schools with 8,749 pupils and 179 teachers, three secondary schools with 3,652 students and 105 professors, and one vocational school with 32 students and eight professors.
Public health: Hospital care is concentrated on the island of Male. There is one hospital bed per 2,566 inhabitants.
Religion: Islam is the official religion. The administration ofjustice is based on the Shariyah, the Islamic law.

MALI




SAHARA
ALGERIA
MAURITANIA
SENEGAL
BAMAKO
NIGER
UPPER VOLTA
GUINEA
BENIN
NIGERIA
GHANA
TOGO
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IVORY COAST

Official name: The Republic of Mali.
Area: 1,240,000 sq.km.
Borders: In the north and northeast Mali borders on Algeria, in the south on the Republic of Guinea, the Ivory Coast and Upper Volta, in the east on Niger, and in the west on Mauritania and Senegal.
Population: 6,465,000 inhabitants in 1979. The annual rate of population growth was 2.5% in the period 1970-1977. The most important ethnic groups include the Bambara, the largest group with 1,200,000 members, living in the west-central and southwestern parts of Mali, the Sarakhole, 280,000 strong, inhabiting the west of the Sahel area, the Malinke (Mandinga), 250,000 strong and living in the southwestern part of the country, the Songhai, also 250,000 strong and living along the Niger Valley, made up of Berbers, Arab-Berber tribes, and the Tuaregs. There are also the Dogon, of whom there are some 180,000 living on the plains around Bandiagara, the Voltaic group, 310,000 strong, made up of the Bobo, the Senoupho and the Minianka, inhabiting the east and southeast of Mali, the 450,000 Peul of the Sahel, as well as the Kassonke in the northwest, the Bozo, and the Somono.
Capital: Bamako.
Principal cities: Segou, Kayes, Mopti, Sikasso, and Timbuktu.
Languages: French is the official language, but a number of African languages are spoken, mainly the Bambara, which is used by two-thirds of the population.
Public holidays: September 22, Independence Day (1960).
Geography: The territory of Mali includes large geographical areas of a widely different character—the Sahara Desert as well as the fertile and humid zone of the Sudan.

The area of semi-arid plateaus rises in the north to the Adrar Des Ifors Mountains which form the border with the Sahara. That region has practically no vegetation or fauna, and the climate changes from semi-arid to desert.

In the truly Saharan region temperatures reach their highest point. In the mid-1960s an intensive drought hit the Sahel zone which passes through Mali and other countries in the east and west of the African continent. This natural disaster further grew in recent years and it is estimated that some 2,000,000 people have been affected by it in Mali alone, where the vast northern region of that country—covering some 50,000 sq.km--has become a desert.

The semi-tropical area is found in the south and gets abundant rainfall, although in recent years that, too, has diminished. It has a tropical climate and luxurious forests alternate with fertile plains used for agriculture. This is where the main artery of the country, the central course of the Niger River, 1,700 km long, passes on its way from the Republic of Guinea in the southwest to the west where it leaves Mali for Niger and then Nigeria.

It is estimated that 75% of the population of Mali live along the banks of the Niger. In the west of the southern region is the Senegal River which is of lesser importance. This is the area of concentration of both agricultural wealth and human population, an area of many lakes surrounded by thick vegetation.

Brief history: Archaeological finds on the territory of present-day Mali document the existence of man in the area a long time ago. Because of its geographical position, Mali was a crossroads for trade between different parts of Africa. The Phoenicians and Carthaginians maintained busy commerical contacts with merchants in the area of present-day Mali.

Between the 4th and 16th centuries, the territory of Mali was the site of the great black empires of Western Africa, such as those of Ghana—until the 13th century—and Mali, the latter covering an area of more than 3,000,000 sq.km and ruled for more than four centuries by the Keita dynasty. Later, in the 15th century, the Songhai or Gao Empire emerged in the area, whose decline ended in 1591 with Moroccan domination which was, however, of short duration.

The disintegration of the Mali and Gao Empires gave rise to new kingdoms in the 18th century, the Segu and the Kaarta, which while vigorous, fought against each other, thus facilitating the domination of the area by European colonialists.

In 1854, a small but well-armed force of French adventurers landed in Senegal and from there marched into the interior to begin the colonization of Upper Senegal, an area which included present-day Mali, Upper Volta and a part of Niger.

In spite of the stiff resistance put up by the inhabitants of these territories against their colonization, in particular by Samory Toure, internal rivalry did not permit the crystallization of a resistance movement strong enough to defeat the French colonizers.

Upper Senegal was completely colonized by France in 1892 and became a part of her overseas territories.

In 1904, French West Africa was officially established, consisting of five colonies: Senegal, Guinea, the Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Upper Senegal, and Niger. Subsequently, the territory of Mauritania was incorporated into French West Africa, just as shortly thereafter the Military Area of Niger was formed from parts of the colonies of Upper Senegal and Niger. Upper Volta was separated from Upper Senegal and turned into a colony. What was left of Upper Senegal became known as the French Sudan in 1920.

During World War I, the French Sudan, as most of the other colonies, took part in the French "war effort" whereby it provided great assistance to the French metropolis. For the inhabitants of the French colonies this "war effort" meant a further intensification of their colonial exploitation.

During World War II, the French Sudan, as most of the other colonies of French West Africa, remained loyal to the pro-Nazi Petain government in Vichy until 1943, when the French Committee of National Liberation prevailed in Algeria and the colonial administrators were condemned.

The end of the world conflict saw the beginning of a powerful upsurge of African nationalism. In 1946, the African Democratic Union (RDA) was founded in Bamako, including the nationalist leaders from French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa. The President of this organization was Felix Houphouet Boigny of the Ivory Coast.

In the same year, Mamadou Konate founded the Sudanese Union, the Sudanese section of the RDA, of which he was the chairman until his death in 1956, when he was succeeded by Modibo Keita. In that year, too, Modibo Keita was elected member of the French National Assembly which in the same year passed a "Framework Law" co-sponsored by Houpouet Boigny; this law provided for a slow de-colonization of the French territories in Africa, but "Balkanized" them. The Sudanese Union of the RDA supported the "Framework Law".

The French Sudan approved in 1958, in a referendum ordered by the French President, Charles de Gaulle, the formation of the French Community of Nations and in November of that year it was proclaimed an autonomous republic.

Elections were held from March 6 to 8, 1959, in which the Sudanese Union won and Modibo Keita thus became Prime Minister.

On June 20, 1960, the French Sudan and Senegal formed the Mali Federation with Leopold Sedar Sengor becoming President and Modibo Keita Prime Minister. However, political differences between the two leaders rapidly disrupted the Federation. Senghor announced his withdrawal from it and with the help of gendarmes from Dakar arrested the Sudanese leaders, including Modibo Keita, and deported them to the French Sudan.

On August 20, 1960, the Federation definitively broke up.

A month later, on September 20, Modibo Keita was elected President of the newly formed Republic of Mali.

Also in 1960, the National Assembly of Mali approved a constitution which declared that "the Republic of Mali is an indivisible, democratic and social State. It guarantees before the law the equality of all, irrespective of social origin, race, sex or religion".

In its foreign policy, the Keita government pursued a progressive line. In 1960, Modibo Keita urged France to stop her war against the Algerian people. In 1961, the Mali government demanded the abolition of French military bases in the country and a few months later the last foreign soliders left Mali.

In the United Nations the delegates representing Mali called for peace, prohibition of nuclear weapons and complete abolition of the colonial system. The Mali government broke off relations with Great Britain in protest against that country's policy on Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). It demanded the end of the bombing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the withdrawal of foreign troops from South Vietnam. It repeatedly and vehemently condemned Israeli aggression against the Arab people.

The Republic of Mali established friendly relations with the socialist countries which provided it with considerable assistance. The Soviet Union granted Mali long-term credits and extended its assistance in the geological survey of the country. In those years, too, Mali's relations with the other socialist countries developed in a satisfactory manner.

In 1962, Mali left the franc zone and established its own currency, although some years later it had to rejoin that zone because of economic problems.

In the 1964 elections Modibo Keita was the only candidate and won a landslide victory.

Two years later, in 1966, a National Committee for the Defence of the Revolution was formed, headed by President Keita, and became the leading institution in the country. In 1967, the Political Bureau of the Sudanese Union was disbanded and the National Committee (CNDR) assumed all the powers of the top governing body.

In spite of the revolutionary endeavours of President Keita, other government officials discredited the government. A political crisis developed within the government which was already facing serious economic difficulties.

On November 19, 1968, a coup overthrew Modibo Keita and installed a military government. High military officers formed a Military Committee for National Liberation (CMNL) which became the supreme governing body in the country.

This Committee, headed by Col. Moussa Traore, had a vice-chairman and included a commissioner, a permanent secretary and seven other members.

The new government disbanded the Sudanese Union Party, imprisoned its leaders and began to promote friendly relations with all the countries in the area. Mali delegations toured most of the countries of West Africa in order to explain the reasons for the coup and to convey to them the good will of the new government.

The government headed by Moussa Traore pursued a foreign policy of a progressive character. In June 1969, Mali officially recognized the Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam. In January 1970, President Traore, while on a visit to Algeria, re-asserted jointly with that country's President, Houare Boumedienne, their agreement to continue the struggle for national independence and non-alignment, as well as against imperialism, and their solidarity with national liberation movements, in particular the struggle of the Palestinian people.

In the middle of 1970, Mali signed a treaty of cooperation in the fields of education, science, public health, the arts and sports with the Soviet Union. This treaty became the starting point for the establishment of closer relations between the two countries. Mali established in the same manner relations with other socialist countries, which have been growing from year to year.

In 1974, a new constitution was approved by popular consensus but was to be put into effect within five years.

In 1977, the government of Mali decreed an amnesty which covered all political prisoners in the country, including officials of the government of Modibo Keita who had died on May 18 of that year.

A purge of government offiicals who were hampering the democratic development of the country was carried out in February 1978, resulting in the arrest of Lieut. Col. Kissima Doukara, Minister of Defence, the Interior and Security, Lieut. Col. Karim Dembele, Minister of Transport and Labour, and Lieut. Col. Tiecoro Bagayoko, Director General of Security Services.

After their arrest, the accused were dismissed from their office and tried on charges of high treason.

Mali was one of the countries which attended the Franco-African Conference held in Paris in May 1978 and which rejected the idea of setting up an inter-African intervention force under French patronage. The Mali Minister of Foreign Relations, Alioune Blondin Beye, said in this respect, that the creation of such a force, armed and organized by France, would in fact constitute a Franco-African pact which runs counter to the principle of non-alignment.

In March 1979, a Democratic Union of the Mali People (UDPM) was constituted as the sole political party in the country. In June of the same year, Moussa Traore changed his title of President of the Military Committee to that of the President of the Republic.

Economy: Mali's national economy is based on agriculture which is pursued on 11,600,000 of the country's total area of 122,000,000 hectares by some 91% of the economically active population, which was estimated at 2,260,000 persons in 1972. They produce 1,080,000 tons of millet (1979), 43,000 tons of cotton fibres and 75,000 tons of cotton seed (1978), 179,000 tons of peanuts (1979), 270,000 tons of rice (1978), and 143,000 tons of sugar cane (1978). The forests yielded 3,186,000 cu.m of timber and the rubber plantations 1,000 tons of latex in 1977. 1978 livestock production figures showed that Mali had 4,263,000 head of cattle, 5,849,000 sheep, 5,629,000 goats, 459,000 donkeys, 198,000 camels, and 170,000 horses. Fresh-water fishing yielded a 100,000 ton catch annually in the 1975-1978 period. The mining sector is in the stage of a survey of deposits of different non-metallic elements, while industry is of the light character (food-processing and canneries, textiles and footwear). Mali also produced 50,000 tons of cement in 1976 and 94,000,000 kWh of electricity in the same year. According to the latest available figures, Mali's gross national product amounted to 760,000,000 dollars in 1978.

The per capita gross national product was 120 dollars in 1978. The national budget was balanced at 61,490 million Mali francs of income and expenditures in 1978. In the same year, Mali's balance of trade ended with a deficit of 48,790 million Mali francs due to 91,290 million Mali francs of imports and 42,500 million Mali francs of exports.

Mali's foreign debt stood at 327,000,000 dollars in 1975 according to World Bank figures, while its foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 6,200,000 dollars in 1977. The cost of living in 1976 was 196.2% higher than in 1970. The national currency is the CFA franc since 1981. Foreign investments in Mali amounted to 2,500,000 dollars in 1976.

Government: Mali has a presidential-type system of government. Its 1960 constitution was abolished in 1968 by the Military Committee for National Liberation subsequent to the overthrow of President Modibo Keita. A Fundamental Law was instituted in the same year and remained in force until 1974, when a national referendum approved a new constitution to go into effect in 1979. Under its provisions the President of the Republic is elected by popular vote for a term of five years and may be re-elected only once. The National Assembly is also elected every five years.

Armed forces: The armed forces have 4,200 men serving in the army and 150 men in the air force. An additional 5,700 men serve in paramilitary units.

Organizations: The constitution permits the existence of political parties. The Democratic Union of the Mali People (UDPM) was formed in 1978 as the only political party in the country.

There is a workers' organization, the National Union of Mali Workers (UNTM), established in 1960.

There is also a National Union of Mali Youth (UNJM).

Culture, education and sports: Music and dance are the main expressions of Mali culture and form a part of the cultural heritage of the Malinke and Songhai peoples.

The Bambara and Voltaic groups excel in the production of masks, statuettes and different articles typical of the traditional African religious cults.

There are different cultural institutions in the country, among which the most outstanding is the Museum of the Research and Documentation Institute in Bamako, which possesses valuable collections of national art. There is also a National Archive, a National Library, and an Institute of Humanities, all located in the capital.

There are two Documentation Centres—an Arabic one in Timbuktu and a French one in Bamako.

The government promotes popular culture through its Commitee for Youth and Sports. The youth organizations promote sports, the theatre, music and dancing in the major communities.

Youth Week is a bi-annual competition held in Bamako as the most important cultural event in the country. Mali has a National Ballet Company, an Arts Institute and an Artists' Centre in Bamako.

The educational system was changed in 1962, replacing the earlier French model.

The new system is made up of two educational cycles—the primary, or basic, cycle of nine years, and a secondary cycle of three years. In 1976, 25% of children of school age attended primary schools. In the 1976-1977 school term, 291,966 pupils attended primary schools and 11,524 were enrolled in secondary schools. 2,920 students attend universities in Mali and 1,365 abroad.

The government-sponsored literacy campaign showed that 61,665 individuals had learned to read and write in the period 1970-1971.

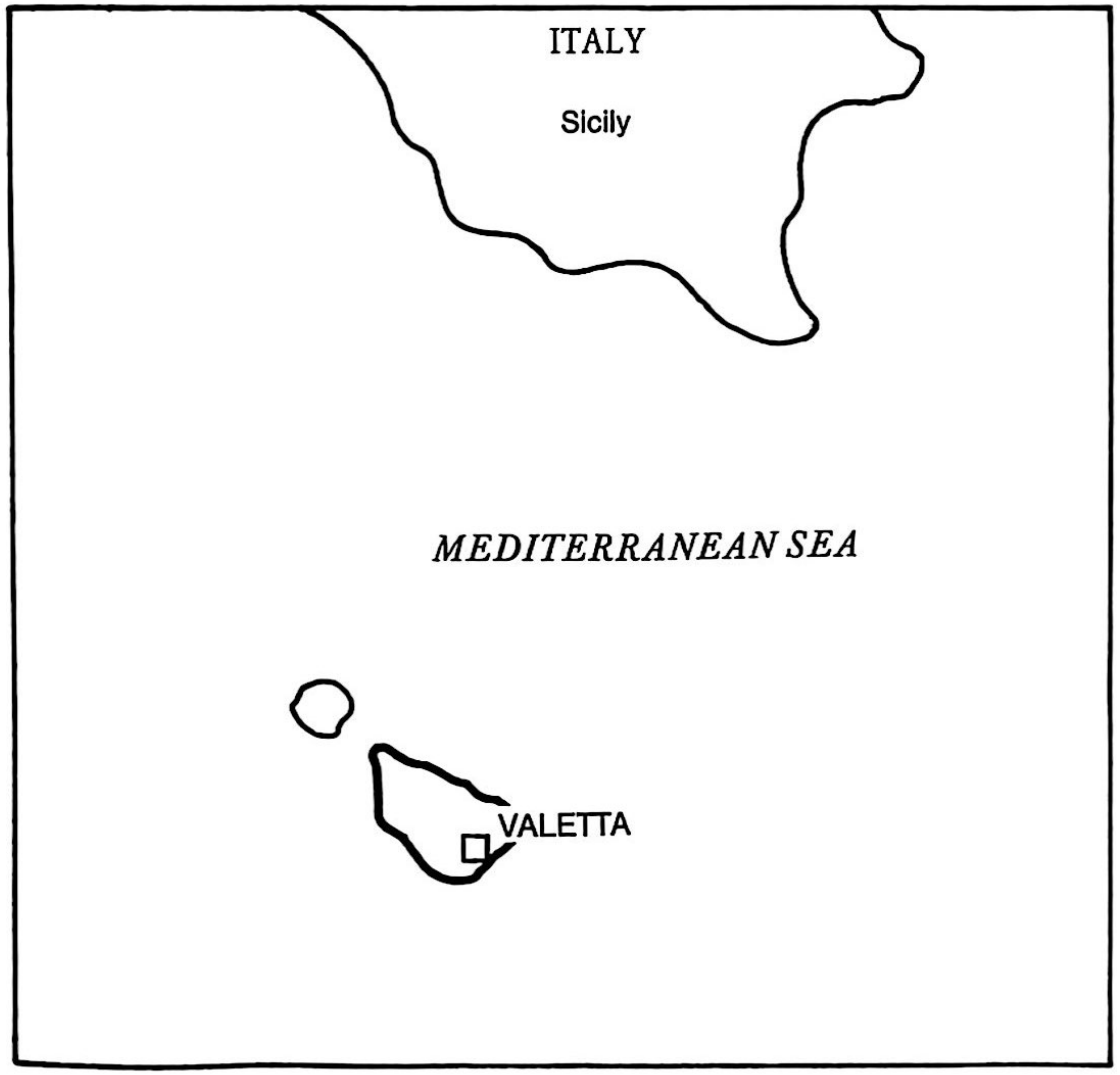
Football is the national sport. Also practiced, but on a lesser scale, are athletics and table tennis.

Public health: In 1972, there were 135 doctors in the country, i.e. one for every 38,960 inhabitants, while in 1971, the hospital capacity was 3,718 beds, i.e. one for every 1,382 inhabitants.

The daily per capita calory intake is 2,170, which is less than the FAO-recommended 2,300 calories.

Religion: 65% of the Mali population are Moslems, roughly 30% practice traditional African cults, and the rest of the population profess different Christian creeds.

MALTA



Official name: Republic of Malta.
Area: 316 sq.km.
Borders: The Republic of Malta is made up of five islands (Malta, which is the largest of them, Gozo, Comino, Comminoto and Filfia) located in the Mediterranean Sea some 60 miles south of Sicily and 180 miles north of the African coast.
Population: An estimated 309,000 inhabitants in 1980. The annual rate of population growth is 0.3%.
Capital: Valletta (15,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Birkirkara, Hamrun and Msida.
Languages: Maltese and English are official. Italian is widely spoken.
Geography: Of the five Maltese islands only Malta, Gozo and Comino are inhabited. There are no mountains or rivers, but the steep and rocky coast is articulated with many deep inlets and bays providing shelter to navigation. The climate is typically Mediterranean with temperate and rainy winters and very hot dry summers. The average rainfall is 20 inches, coming mostly between October and March.
Brief history: The origins of the Maltese nation are lost in the long history of the Mediterranean Sea where it occupies a highly strategic position—the reason for the successive occupation of the islands by a number of civilizations.

Historians believe that the first inhabitants came to Malta in the 4th millennium B.C. and that they were most probably the Phoenicians who were subsequently replaced by the Greeks and the Carthaginians. The Romans dominated the small islands for some seven centuries, after which the Vandals came and they, in turn, were driven out by the Byzantines. Between the years 870 and 1091 Malta was held by the Arabs, who stayed for more than one and a half centuries in spite of its subsequent conquest by the Normans and Germans.

The Arab presence left a deep imprint on the Maltese culture particularly its architecture and language.

In 1530, Charles V gave Malta to the Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, who settled on the island after having been forced out of Palestine by the Arabs. In 1565, the Kinghts and the islanders successfully resisted a Turkish seige for four months. After the Turks had withdrawn, Jean Parisot de la Vallette founded the capital called laer Valletta in his honour.

The Order of the Knights of Malta, which pursues its work to this day, grew out of the Order of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, although it has no official connection with the present-day Republic, and devotes itself to charity and education, which it officially states as its purpose.

In 1789, Napoleon seized the island which in 1800 was taken by the English. 15 years later, at the Congress of Vienna, the British possession of Malta was confirmed, thus making Britain's colonial rule over the small islands official.

In the 19th century, during the Crimean War, British warships were already being repaired in Maltese shipyards. After the opening of the Suez Canal, the strategic importance of the island increased. The Grand Harbour in Valletta was used by British and French naval squadrons during World War I.

In 1921, due to popular demands, relative autonomy was granted to Malta only to be revoked ten years later. The island played a distinguished role during World War II as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier"—a description given it by a British politician. It withstood more than 12,000 Italian and German air raids and an Italian naval blockade which lasted from June 1940 to the middle of 1943, when Mussolini's regime fell.

After World War II, Malta retained its great importance for the Western—particularly British—domination of the Western Mediterranean and of Egypt.

Faced by popular demands, Britain had to re-institute the constitution she had revoked earlier, and two years later, in September 1964, grant Malta independence within the framework of the British Commonwealth. The independence was formal because the reins of power continued to be held by the British Crown represented by a Governor.

After independence, in 1964, a constitution was approved, a parliament was set up, and elections were held to establish a new government. The Nationalist Party, which supported the British military presence on Maltese territory, remained in power until 1971.

In that year, the Labour Party, led by Dominic Mintoff, won the parliamentary elections with a platform of a decidedly anti-colonialist and non-aligned character. Mintoff had been in charge of public works and reconstruction from 1947 to 1949, and served as Premier and Finance Minister from 1955 to 1958.

Under the existing agreements, the British and NATO presence on the island was to continue for many years, but in 1976 the Labour Party again won a parliamentary majority and persisted in its demand that the military bases should be abolished.

On March 31, 1979, the last British troops, the Marines manning the St. Andrew's base, the warships anchored in the bay of Grand Harbour, and the warplanes at the Madliena and Luqa air bases left the country.

The policy pursued by the Labour Party government of Mintoff, one of whose first steps upon assuming power was to order the NATO naval commander, Admiral Gino Birindelli, to leave the island, also frustrated the United States plans to base in Malta a large part of its Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean.

In the economic sphere, the Labour government has succeeded in stimulating the economic growth of the small islands which have no natural resources but those of their position between Africa and Europe and their excellent harbours.

In 1974, Malta cut its dependence on Britain and proclaimed itself a Republic, although remaining a member of the Commonwealth. In 1976, Malta's first President, Anthony Mamo, was succeeded in office by Anton Buttigieg, a distinguished member of the Labour government, elected to the presidency by parliament.

In recent years, Malta has received economic assistance from Libya—mainly to increase job opportunities following the abolishment of the foreign military bases—although there has been some friction between the two countries about the delimitation of their sea borders.

Malta also maintains relations and commercial ties with a number of socialist countries. In 1981, following Mintoff's visit to Italy, plans for strengthening bilateral relations between the two countries were announced.
Economy: Malta's gross national product in 1978 was 730 million U.S. dollars. Industry accounted for 55.9% of that sum—manufacturing in particular having raised its contribution to the GNP to 38.5%—while the share of agriculture remained at 5.6%, the rest being the contribution of the tertiary sector.

The value of the output of the manufacturing industry in 1977 was estimated at 164.8 million Maltese pounds. The main branches of that industry are the manufacture of textiles and garments, food, printed matter, electronic products, and vehicles. The Malta Development Corporation launched in that year 46 new light industry projects intended to diversify that sector of the national economy. In Novmber 1977, the manufacturing industry employed 31,346 workers.

The main heavy industry are the dry docks, which in 1977 employed more than 5,100 workers and engineers. At present there are five such docks, but investments have been made into the construction of at least two more. The plans to enlarge the Suez Canal should have a favourable impact on the Maltese economy because this would spur the repair of heavy-tonnage vessels.

Agriculture is facing difficulties as far as its expansion is concerned, due to the craggy terrain and great density of population. Moreover, there is limited water supply since there are no streams on the island. Nevertheless, agriculture provides work to more than 16,000 people. The main agricultural products are potatoes, tomatoes, onions, cabbage, and carrots. The island also produces some 5.8 million gallons of milk annually. Because of the aforesaid limitations, Malta imports the major part of its food, including meat and wheat. There are government plans to combat unemployment by investments into the agricultural sector.

There has been a steady growth of tourism since 1972. In 1978, the number of visitors to the island passed the 450,000 mark, which represents a more than 30% increase compared with the previous year. In 1977, tourism provided the country with a revenue of 37.5 million Maltese pounds.

Between 1973 and 1980, an ambitious development plan was put into effect, aimed at increasing the country's industrial and service capacity, with an estimated 5 to 6% annual growth of the gross national product. The basic objectives included the discovery of new sources of income, which would replace those lost by the evacuation of the NATO military and naval bases, completed in 1979.

Besides the already mentioned additions to Malta's dry dock capacity, the planned projects included the construction of new port facilities in Marsaxlokk Bay at the cost of 40 million Maltese pounds.

In 1978 unemployment dropped to 4,026 out of a labour force in excess of 115,000 persons, mainly due to increased job opportunities in the metal-working industry and in textile manufacture.

According to 1977 figures, Malta's total imports amounted to 217.7 million Maltese pounds, coming mostly from Great Britain, Italy, the Federal Republic of Germany, and the United States. In the same year, the value of exports was 104 million Maltese pounds. The major customers were the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Libya, and Belgium. Thus, Malta is faced by a serious balance of trade deficit which has built up over the past decade.

In November 1978, the country's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 904.5 million dollars. In the same year, the annual per capita income was 2,147 dollars.

Government: Executive power is exercised by a Prime Minister who is assisted by a cabinet of ministers. Legislative power is vested in a parliament of 65 members elected for a five-year term by universal suffrage; the parliamentary seats are divided among the individual political parties according to the election results under a complicated system of proportional representation.

Currently, 34 seats are held by the ruling Labour Party and 31 seats by the Nationalist Party led by George Borg.

Armed forces: Malta has 800 men in the armed forces and a paramilitary corps of 3,000 men.

Organizations: There are two major political parties—the Labour Party and the Nationalist Party. There is also a Communist Party, but it is not represented in parliament.

The largest political group is the Labour Party, which has 20,000 members and which has been in power since 1971. Its platform is one of non-alignment and anti-colonialism in foreign affairs.

The manifestly pro-Western Nationalist Party enjoys the support of the Church and its objectives include preservation of Malta's Roman Catholic and European traditions.

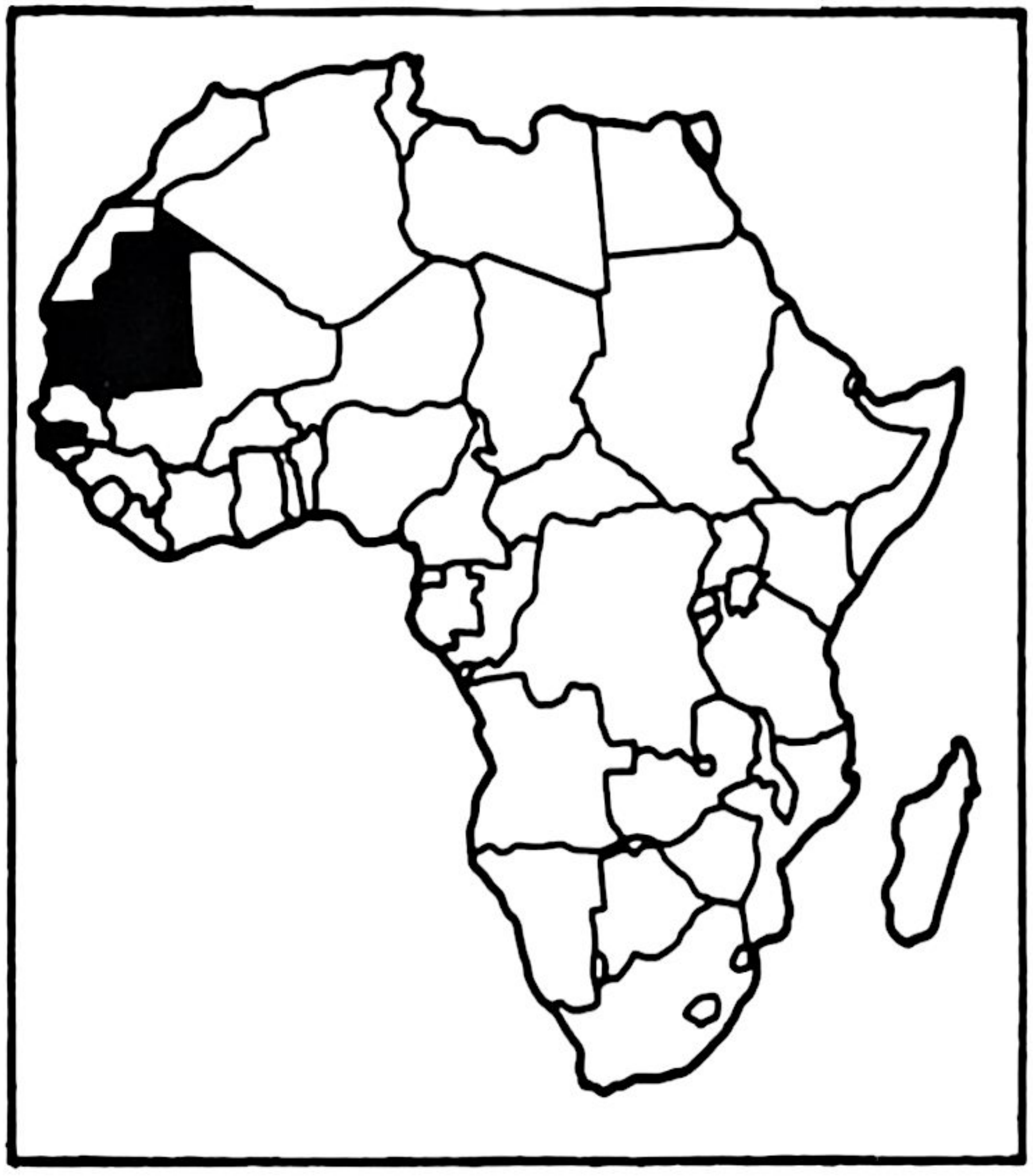
The main trade union organization is the Confederation of Maltese Trade Unions, which has some 100,000 members associated in 24 national unions.

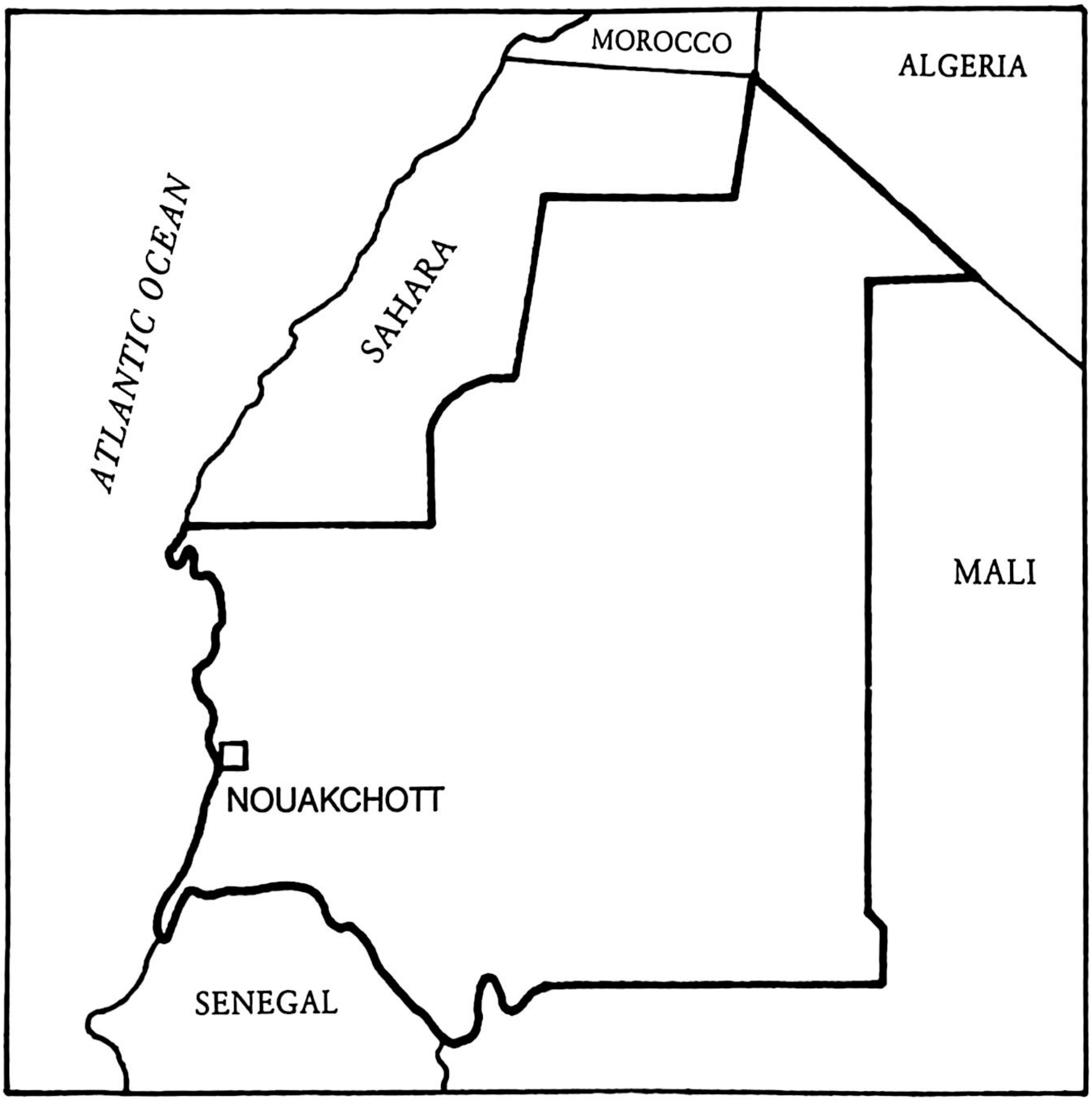
Education: According to 1977 figures, there were 233 primary and secondary schools in the country with an enrolment of 62,276 pupils, as well as 1,294 university students. The 1978 budgetary allocation for education was 8.8 million Maltese pounds.

Public health: There were 9 hospitals with 3,431 beds, and 328 doctors in 1978, while the budgetary outlays for public health amounted to 7.7 million Maltese pounds.

Religion: Roman Catholicism is the official and predominant religion. There are some very small Protestant groups.

MAURITANIA




MOROCCO
ALGERIA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SAHARA
MALI
NOUAKCHOTT
SENEGAL

Official name: The Islamic Republic of Mauritania.
Area: 1,030,700 sq.km.
Borders: In the northeast Mauritania borders on Algeria, in the north and northwest on the Western Sahara, in the east and southeast on Mali, in the southwest on Senegal, and in the west is the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: In 1979, Mauritania had 1,588,000 inhabitants and in the period 1970-1977 its average annual rate of population growth was 2.7%. More than half a million of the country's total population are nomads. As a result of the changes that have taken place in Mauritania since its independence, there has been a growing trend among the nomads to settle down. The main ethnic groups are the Moors (80%), the Touscouleurs, the Peue, the Bambara, the Wolof, and the Saracolle.
Capital: Nouakchott.
Principal cities: Nouadhibou, Kaedi, Zouerate, Rosso, and Atar.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: November 28 Independence Day (1960).
Geography: From the morphological aspect, Mauritania has a rather monotonous landscape with a number of rocky highlands and vast areas covered with sand. A few mountain ranges not exceeding 600 m in altitude bisect the plains.

Mauritania's only important river is the Senegal River which forms its southwestern frontier with the Republic of Senegal.

The climate is tropical in character. It is very dry and hot, and in many parts of the country the temperature is desert-like. The Atlantic Ocean influences the climate only in the west which gets some rainfall, while the rest of the country is under the influence of the Sahara Desert. In the southwest the desert turns into savanna irrigated by the Senegal River.

Brief history: Between the 6th and 1st millenniums B.C., the Sahara suffered a progressive transformation from a fertile, orchard-like region into the present-day desert. The large, black population which had inhabited it moved to the south, leaving an empty area between the Berber settlements in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia, and the black settlements in the Sudan. This area was exposed to many invasions and influences, and it was here that the two ethnic groups met and intermingled through trade and war.

While the black population had settled down and farmed along the Senegal River, the Berbers and Arabs, better adjusted to a nomadic way of life and from the north, penetrated ever deeper south into the desert, with their camels and goats, in search of the few pastures this vast expanse of land could offer. Some of them did settle down in oases, living off dates, wheat and barley, and camel and goat milk. It was through them, that Islam gradually spread among the black population of the south.

The emergence in the 11th century of the Almoravid warriors profoundly changed the situation. This dynasty of Berber origin pacified the area and attacked the powerful and rich black empire of Ghana, which it subjugated in 1076.

However, the Almoravid glory was of short duration when the Almoravids were toppled by the Almohads in Morocco, and Mauritania once again disintegrated as a political entity under the impact of intertribal warfare. The rivalry between the Arabs and the Berbers characterized the history of this area until the 17th century when the first contacts were established with Europe through trade with gum Arabic, slaves and ivory.

The Portuguese were the first to establish their posts along the coast in the Cape Verde area in present-day Senegal. However, it was the French who succeeded in seizing control of the mouth of the Senegal River and in 1683 established there the town of Saint Louis as a busy trading centre and an eventual base for further penetration of the interior. Although they had been driven out twice by the British, in 1817 the French established definitive rule over the area which was to become known as French West Africa.

Mauritania continued to stay north of the limits of French expansion. Being poor and almost devoid of population, it was ignored by the French colonialists who on several occasions merely sent in military expeditions to suppress persistent uprisings by the Moors (who are of mixed, Berber-Arab origin), the nomadic inhabitants of most of the country. French commercial companies operated in a zone which extended barely 100 km inland along the right bank of the Senegal River. Further north, the Moor tribes lived isolated and free, always ready to raid the richer settlements in the south.

In 1854, the French governor, Faidherbe, succeeded in pacifying the area along the Senegal River and drove the Moors from its left bank. He concluded a number of treaties with them and sent some troops to explore the territory of present-day Mauritania.

This period of relative peace was followed by new conflicts. The Moors attacked not only Europeans, but almost constantly the sedentary black population as well. In the early years of the present century, France undertook an operation of military occupation and "pacification" of the area, which was successfully carried out. Commanding a strong military detachment, Col. Gouraud seized Adrar and scattered the rebellious tribes which operated in Mauritania's central region. The colony of Mauritania was established in 1920. However, new raids carried out from southern Morocco extended the military campaign until 1934. As soon as Morocco was granted independence by France in March 1956, its new government claimed sovereignty over Mauritania, asserting that it was a Moroccan "province". In the same year under the *Loi cadre* (the Framework Law), the French conceded internal autonomy to Mauritania.

In the course of the next two years, the Moroccans made several incursions into the northern and central parts of Mauritania, thereby provoking French intervention which settled the conflict. The nationalist movement was represented by a political party, the Mauritanian Progressive Union (UPM), led by Sidi Moktar N'Diaye, which was joined by Ould Daddah in 1956. The UPM, founded in 1947, was favoured by the French colonial administration.

In March 1957, Ould Daddah was elected to the Regional Assembly for Adrar. Later he became the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, Minister of Youth, Sports and Education, and Chairman of the Executive Council. In 1958, he founded the Mauritanian People's Party (PPM) of which he was elected General Secretary.

In November 1958, his party voted in a referendum proposed by Charles de Gaulle in favour of Mauritania's staying in the French Community.

However, like most of the members of this Community, Mauritania opted for independence in 1960. Independence was proclaimed on November 28 of that year.

The proclamation of independence was followed by elections which had been prepared by the French. The forces opposing Ould Daddah's Mauritanian People's Party were silenced by the French who still wielded control over the government. Without any effective opposition, Moktar Ould Daddah won the elections and was proclaimed President of the Republic.

In its economic policy, the Ould Daddah government did very poorly. When independence came, Mauritania had no economic infrastructure, not even of the primary type its neighbours Senegal and Morocco had. In the country which consists mostly of desert, cyclic droughts affect the few areas of arable land and even today produce serious shortages of food. Under this situation, the French economic penetration favoured by the government after the first post-independence agreements with the former metropolitan country had been signed, had a truly dramatic impact.

The formation of the MIFERMA company in 1963 for the purpose of exploiting Mauritania's great deposits of iron ore made the country still more dependent on foreign capital. MIFERMA is made up of the British Steel Company (19% of the shares), Finsider (15%), Denain-Usinor (14.4%), Rothschild Metal (11.4%), BRGM (24%) and some other foreign companies; Mauritania's participation amounts to a mere 5%.

Domestically, the Mauritanian government turned Ould Daddah's Mauritanian People's Party into the country's only political party and thus elections became a mere confirmation of Mauritania's rulers. The government also took steps towards the establishment of a single trade union centre affiliated with the PPM. This plan provoked large-scale protests which went on for several years and reached their climax in the autumn of 1971. Eventually, however, the government forced the realization of its designs and the Mauritanian Workers' Union was set up in 1973.

When the Organization of African States (OAS) was constituted, Mauritania became one of its founding members and expressed its support of that organization's charter. It also joined the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

In 1973, Mauritania joined the Arab League, established its own currency—the ouguiya—and a national bank with the help of Algeria, Libya and Kuwait, and launched a process of "Mauritanization" of the national economy.

As a part of this process, the government nationalized in 1974 the MIFERMA company against compensation. The foreign mining interests affected by this move responded by blocking Mauritanian funds derived from sales of minerals, as well as cargoes located in European ports.

This policy of nationalist reforms was designed to win the sympathy of the *kadibines*, i.e. the opposition grouped in the National Democratic Movement which adhered to the PPM.

The congress of the PPM held in 1975, discussed such reforms as women's emancipation, agrarian reform and others, but they never reached the stage of realization.

The events in Africa in 1975—the independence of the former Portuguese colonies, the war in Angola and others—had a profound impact on the political forces of that continent.

Following several declarations and the signing of a number of agreements favouring the independence of the Western Sahara and the right of its people to self-determination, the government of Ould Daddah signed a tripartite agreement with Morocco and Spain, whereby the rights of the Saharan people were denied and territory of the Western Sahara and its natural resources were divided between Morocco and Mauritania. Thereupon, Mauritanian troops occupied the southern Saharan province of Rio de Oro.

This partition and the international political stance taken by Mauritania caused a rupture of diplomatic relations with Algeria and the estrangement of Mauritania from the progressive Arab countries.

A drop in the demand for copper on the world market had a negative effect on the price of this commodity which together with iron ore and fish is the mainstay of the Mauritanian economy. The copper mine at Akujt, nationalized in 1974, was temporarily closed.

On the other hand, while the price of iron ore remained nominally stable, inflation raised the prices of industrial products, which reduced the real prices of the metal. This led to Mauritainia's indebtedness to Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Abu Dhabi. The three countries provided to Mauritania in a single year loans equivalent to its total national budget.

The unlawful occupation of the Western Sahara had fatal consequences for the Mauritanian economy. In order to pursue its war against the POLISARIO front, the government had to enlarge the size of the armed forces and increase military spending which represented one third of total public expenditures.

However, not even these military measures proved to be sufficient. Unable to resist the POLISARIO Front, Mauritania was forced to appeal to Morocco which stationed 9,000 troops in the territory which had been claimed by Rabat for a long time. For her part, France sent in about 100 officers and military planes.

In addition, an internal crisis undermined the Mauritanian armed forces. Soldiers belonging to the black minority refused to take part in a war which they found alien, while soldiers of Arab ethnic origin began to oppose the war against the Saharans many of whom came from the same tribes as the Mauritanians. This military crisis resulted in eight changes in Mauritania's top command between 1974 and the first quarter of 1979.

On July 10, 1978, Moktar Ould Daddah was overthrown in a coup d'etat led by Colonel Mustapha Ould Mohammed Salek who formed a new government made up of a group of officers, all members of the Military Committee for National Recovery.

The new government declared that it would respect all the international agreements and obligations of the former government. Two days after the coup the POLISARIO Front informed the new government about the situation in the Western Sahara and suspended its military operations. Some days later, the Salek government expressed its readiness to settle the problem peacefully.

A new military coup on April 6, 1979, led by Lieut. Col. Ahmed Ould Bousseif, overthrew the government and brought to power a Military Committee for National Salvation.

The present government replaced the aforesaid Military Committee for National Recovery headed by the former Mauritanian head of state, Col. Mustapha Ould Salek, who in turn was named honorary chairman of the recently established Military Committee for National Salvation.

A new Constitutional Charter, which entered into effect on April 13, 1979, provides that the head of the Military Committee is at the same time the head of state but that he can take a decision of major importance only after prior approval by the Military Committee for National Salvation.

The Charter also stipulates that the Military Committee embodies legislative power and that it has competence to determine the country's general policy and to control the government.

Bousseif died in an airplane crash on May 27, 1979, and was succeeded as head of government by Colonel Mohammed Khouna Ould Haidallah. He had to face political instability in the country and a continued economic deterioration.

On June 4, Mohammed Salek resigned as president and was replaced by Mohammed Mahmoud Ould Ahmed Louly. Ould Haidallah retained his posts as Prime Minister and First Vice-President of the Military Committee for National Salvation (CMSN).

On August 5, 1979, Mauritania signed a peace treaty with the POLISARIO Front and subsequently resumed its relations with Algeria. On January 4, 1980, Ould Haidallah assumed the leadership of the CMSN and consequently also of the state. In July 1980, the Military Committee abolished slavery in Mauritania; it also adopted a programme of economic austerity in order to improve the country's financial situation, and realized a linguistic reform which has important social consequences.

A civilian government was constituted on December 15, 1980. Ould Haidallah declared on that occasion that the CMSN would continue controlling the government's activities until new, democratic institutions were created. Later, at the end of the year, the draft of a new constitution was published, which provides for a popular election of the President of the Republic (for a term of six years and with the possibility of being re-elected once) and of a National Assembly, as well as for the office of Prime Minister and for a Constitutional Council. The draft also envisages the institution of a multi-party system and of a parliamentary Islamic Republic.

Economy: Mining is the mainstay of Mauritania's economy. The country is an important producer of iron ore with an output of 8,423,000 tons in 1977. In that year, however, exports of the ore dropped by 12.5% compared with the 1976 level. Agriculture is of a subsistence character and together with fishing provided occupation in 1975 to some 65% of the economically active population whose number in that year was estimated at 550,000.

According to FAO estimates, Mauritania's principal agricultural products in 1978 included 30,000 tons of sorghum and millet, 14,000 tons of dates, 12,000 tons of rice, and 5,000 tons of peanuts. In 1976, agricultural production also included 390,000 tons of milk. Livestock included in 1978 some 1,500,000 head of cattle, 3,200,000 goats, 4,000,000 sheep, and 718,000 camels. The little industry there is produces textiles, refines sugar, processes and freezes fish, turns out fishmeal and a few other products. Electricity output amounted to 96,000,000 kWh in 1977. As already noted, fishing is an important industry in Mauritania, but the 1977 fish catch dropped to 40,000 tons, of which almost 30,000 tons were exported.

According to World Bank figures, Mauritania's gross national product amounted to 410,000,000 dollars in 1977. The 1976 national budget closed with a deficit due to 5,677 million ouguiyas of income and 5,822 million ouguiyas of expenditures. On December 31, 1976, the external public debt stood at 13,300 million ouguiyas. The 1978 balance of trade showed a deficit—the result of 8,362 million ouguiyas of imports and 5,499 million ouguiyas of exports. In the same year Mauritania's foreign exchange reserves amounted to 79,700,000 dollars. In 1976, the cost-of-living index had risen to 200.7 points from the 1968 base of 100. The national currency is the ouguiya whose rate of exchange in April 1979 was 45.91 per U.S. dollar.

Government: A civilian government was constituted on December 15, 1980, headed by a Prime Minister. However, the Military Committee for National Salvation continues to be Mauritania's ruling body.

Organizations: Mauritania's political organizations, including the Mauritanian People's Party, which since its founding in 1961 had become the country's sole political party, were disbanded shortly after the coup d'etat.

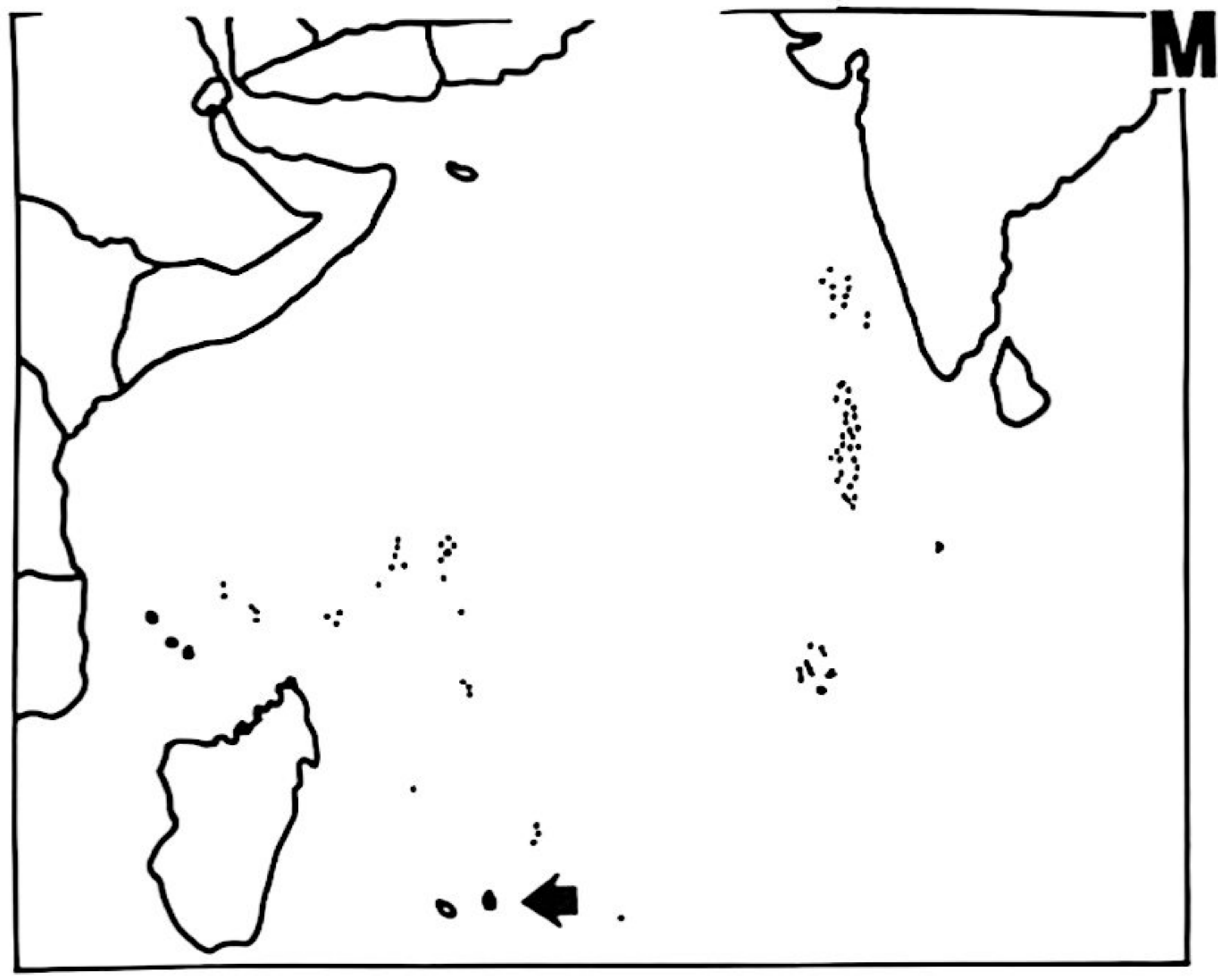
Armed forces: In 1979, Mauritania's armed forces had 9,450 men of whom 9,000 served in the army, 150 in the air force and 300 in the navy. An additional 6,000 men form paramilitary forces. In 1977, during the war against the POLISARIO Front, military expenditures rose to 36.7% of the total national budget.

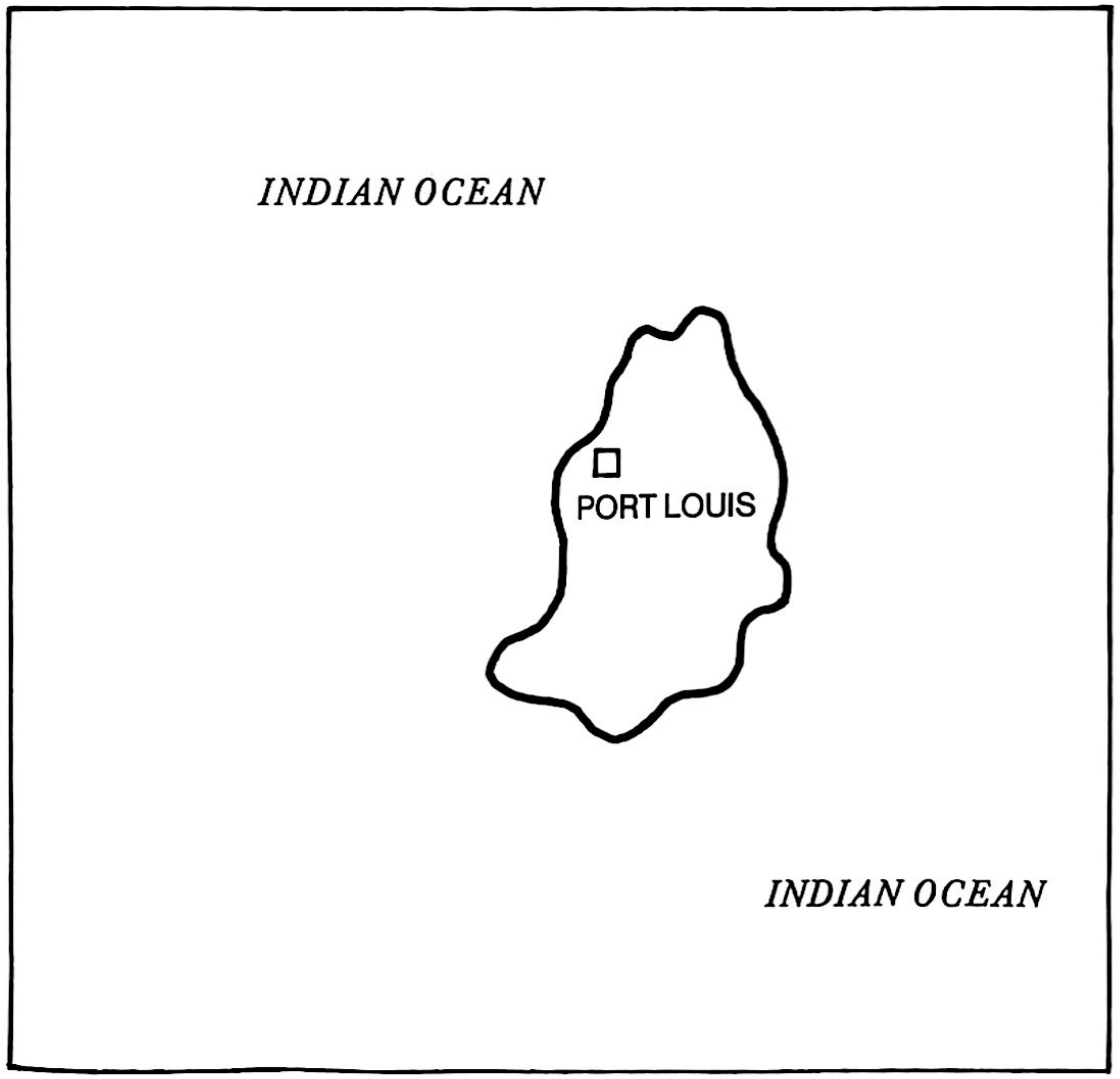
Education: In 1977, Mauritania's illiteracy rate stood at 83%, while the percentage of children of school-age actually attending classes was 23% in the school term 1977-1978. In that term, 75,000 pupils attended primary schools, 9,800 students were enrolled in secondary schools. and 600 students attended vocational schools. There were 500 university students in Mauritania, and 1,300 Mauritanians attended institutions of higher learning abroad.

Public health: In 1978, there was one doctor for 14,000 inhabitants and one hospital bed for 2,400 inhabitants. The daily per capita calory intake was 1,867 calories in the period 1972-1974, which is less than the FAO-recommended 2,300 calories. Life expectancy is 36.5 years for men and 39.6 years for women.

Religion: Islam is Mauritania's official religion and is practiced by the great majority of its population. There are a few small groups professing different Christian creeds.

MAURITIUS





Official name: The Island of Mauritius.
Area: 2,045 sq.km.
Borders: Mauritus lies in the Indian Ocean, some 850 km east of Madagascar.
Population: 942,000 inhabitants in 1980. Density is more than 600 inhabitants per sq.km. Annual population growth in recent years has been 1.3%. The population is composed mainly of Indians (67%), who are the descendants of slaves brought to the island in the 19th century to work in the local sugar mills. The rest of the population is made up of Creoles (28%), Chinese (3%), and French Mauritians.
Capital: Port Louis (140,005 inhabitants, 1977 estimate).
Principal cities: Beau-Bassin, Curepipe, Quatres Bornes, and Vacoas-Phoenix.
Languages: English is the official language, but French, Creole and Hindi are also spoken.
Public holidays: March 12, Independence Day (1968).
Geography: The island is 53 km wide and 72 km long, and has the following dependencies: Rodriguez Islands (104 sq.km and 23,000 inhabitants employed in agriculture and fishing), Agalega Islands (69 sq.km and 400 inhabitants engaged in copra production), and St. Brandon (22 islets 320 km northeast of Mauritius without a permanent population but used as a station by fishermen and guano collectors).

The main island is of volcanic origin and is almost completely surrounded by a coral reef. Its surface rises from the coast to a central plateau with elevations ranging from 225 to 600 m. Many rivers and creeks run through deep gorges and form numerous rapids and cascades.

The climate is influenced by the trade winds; in the lowlands the climate is mostly tropical. The summer season runs from December to April and the winter season from June to September. There is considerable humidity the year round and in some areas the average annual rainfall is 666 mm. The mean temperature varies from 24°C on the coast to 20°C in the highlands. Between December and April, Mauritius suffers from violent tropical storms.

Brief history: Mauritius was first mentioned in the 10th century by Arab navigators, but the first European believed to have visited the island was the Portuguese, Domingo Fernandez. At a later date, in 1505, "The Pearl of the Indian Ocean" was visited by another Portuguese navigator, Pedro Mascarenhas. First the Arabs and then the Portuguese temporarily established their presence on Mauritius, using it as a station on their voyages to more ambitious goals. Dutch sailors gave it its name in honour of Prince Maurice of Nassau. The Dutch then seized the island when Van Warwyck's squadron landed there on September 17, 1598. They were driven out in 1715, when the French claimed Mauritius and renamed it Ile de France. It was governed by the French East India Company until 1767, and became a prosperous and strong colony. In 1767, the French government assumed control of the island which became a naval base during the Napoleonic wars.

In 1810, after fierce battles, the British captured the island. At that time, the sugar industry grew into its most important and, for all practical purposes, the sole industry. The British possession of Mauritius was confirmed by the Treaty of Paris in 1814.

The adverse factors which affected the colonial life of Mauritius included the negative features of the planation economy introduced by the British, epidemics (malaria), the devastation caused by the frequent hurricanes, and fluctuations of the price of sugar on the world market.

As elsewhere, Great Britain put into effect a complex administrative system in Mauritius. After 1947, a colonial Legislative Council was established, which was elected on the basis of universal suffrage. In the 1960s, the Indo-Mauritian majority of the population associated in the Labour Party which stood in the forefront of the different stages of the decolonialization effort as well as of the independence struggle.

Late in 1961, the Labour Party obtained from the British government recognition of the colony's right to independence. That was to be achieved in stages. In the first stage, put into effect in the period 1961-1962, the leader of the majority party in the Legislative Council received the title of Chief Minister who was to consult the Governor on certain legislative matters. The members of the Executive Council became Ministers and together with the Chief Minister assumed the responsibility for running the government. In the second stage, Mauritius was granted internal self-government, except for control of the internal security forces. The Governor retained the authority over foreign affairs, defence and internal security, but before making any decisions, he had to consult the Chief Minister.

In September 1965, following a period of frequent upheaval, Arthur Greenwood, the British Secretary for Colonial Affairs, announced that Britain would grant Mauritius independence not later than by the end of 1966, immediately after a conference on a new constitution for the colony, to be held in London.

The owners of the large sugar-cane plantations, most of them of French origin, sent a delegation to the constitutional conference in an attempt to block independence and to seek some kind of association with Britain.

The Chief Minister and the leader of the Labour Party, Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the head of the autonomous government under the British Governor, demanded independence. At the same time, the leaders of the People's Progressive Party called for immediate and unconditional independence.

Election of a Legislative Assembly, based on universal suffrage, was the last but one and the most decisive stage of the complicated process of granting independence to Mauritius, which was drawn up by the British government of Prime Minister Harold Wilson, because if the progressive forces won, the island could become a truly independent state.

Prior to the final elections, set for August 1967, serious disturbances erupted on the island claiming 30 dead and hundreds of injured. Clashes occurred between the advocates of independence and those who wanted the colonial status to be preserved. Britain sent in a company of 150 soldiers and two warships.

Ramgoolam's Independence Party, which associated the Labour Party, the Moslem Action Committee, and the Independent Vanguard Bloc, won 39 of the 62 seats in the Legislative Assembly, and Ramgoolam became Prime Minister.

The British government promised independence for January 1968, but postponed it until March 12 of the same year, when Mauritius became formally independent of the United Kingdom after 253 years of colonial domination—95 years under the French and 158 years under the British.

A few hours before the four-coloured flag of Mauritius was hoisted, Ramgoolam and Arthur Greenwood, who headed the British delegation to the independence ceremony, signed a treaty of mutual defence and assistance.

The treaty stipulated that Great Britain retained the right to use her installations in the country, would help the local authorities train and equip the Mauritian police and security forces, and that consultations between the two governments would be held in the case of external threat. In 1964 and again in 1968, British troops were airlifted to Mauritius to suppress opposition against the government of Prime Minister Ramgoolam.

In the first months of independence, groups representing French interests in the country pressed the new government to establish closer ties with France. After Mauritius had joined the Afro-Malagasy Organization (OCAM), in which Paris exercised strong influence, nothing interfered with the conversion of that body into the Afro-Malagasy-Mauritian Organization.

The island occupies an important place in the Anglo-American plans of consolidation of the British and United States presence in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean, to help them maintain control of the natural passage for commercial and petroleum traffic between the Arabian-Persian Gulf and the West.

In 1972, the small and strategically placed island experienced two important developments —a strike of dockers and a visit in March, of Queen Elizabeth II, who attended the festivities marking the fourth anniversary of independence. On the eve of the Queen's visit, the authorities arrested the leaders of the Mauritius Militant Movement (MMM), an opposition organization founded in 1968, under the pretext that hostile elements would exploit the royal visit for denouncing the alleged interference by Britain in the country's internal affairs.

The members of the MMM Political Bureau, Paul Berenger and Dev Viraswamy, and their sympathizers were arrested similarly in December 1971, when hundreds of workers went out on strike for higher wages.

Since its foundation, the MMM rapidly extended its influence to all the social strata of the country. Its most significant success was its control of the trade unions, including the dockworkers in the Mauritian capital of Port Louis.

The support this party at the same time received from the majority of voters resulted in its significant victory in by-elections held at the end of 1970, which, together with its control of the most important trade unions, intensified the internal crisis and caused the government's concern. The government then put into effect a plan to break up the MMM.

The people's support of the policy of consolidation of economic independence and more profound social transformation had a decisive effect on the course of the parliamentary elections held in 1976, the first elections after independence.

The MMM, standing for the nationalization of the sugar mills, state control of the ports and insurance companies, and for greater cooperation with the non-aligned countries, won 34 of the 70 seats.

In order to enable Ramgoolam to preserve his post of Prime Minister, his Labour Party and its ally in the government, the Moslem Action Committee, were forced to conclude on December 28, a parliamentary alliance with the Social Democratic Party of Gaetan Duval.

However, the position of the ruling coalition is unstable because of the uneasiness in the country's business circles caused by the economic situation in which Mauritius finds itself. The Labour Party itself is rent by an internal crisis due to some of its members who accuse the party leadership of using outdated methods in its work, which results in a continuing loss of its adherents.

In the bloc of African and Arab countries striving to isolate the racist regime in the Republic of South Africa, the Mauritian government is an exception because it maintains very close ties with Pretoria. In 1980, it was disclosed that the Pretoria regime would lend 145 million dollars to the government in Port Louis and that it would resume buying for preferential prices Mauritian tea which has a reputation for low quality. Aeroplanes of the South African Airways make regular flights to Mauritius. Another project was disclosed in this context known as "Operation Refinery". Under the cover of the Mauritian government and a French firm, the South African government would make all the necessary investments to have at its disposal on Mauritian soil a large refinery for processing petroleum brought there directly from the Gulf states.

The MMM has taken the initiative in launching a large-scale international campaign of information and solidarity for the return of the island of Diego Garcia to Mauritius. That island of 22 sq.km is the main island of the Chagos archipelago which had been occupied by the British and attached to Mauritius in the early 19th century. When the British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) was formed and the archipelago was separated from Mauritian territory, its only inhabited island, Diego Garcia, had a small population of Mauritian origin, speaking Creole but settled there for several generations.

Between 1960 and 1962, the United States negotiated with Britain for the establishment of an air and naval base in the area and granted London credit to the tune of 14 million dollars to be forwarded to the future Mauritian authorities. Finally, on November 10, 1965, the British Secretary of State, Arthur Greenwood, officially announced the exclusion of the Chagos archipelago from Mauritian territory "in agreement with the governments of the Island of Mauritius and the Seychelles", which were both still colonial territories.

On March 29, 1977, the Mauritian Foreign Minister, Harold Walter, publicly admitted: "The base on Diego Garcia? Our independence was worth this price."

Economy: Agriculture is based on a single crop—sugar cane—and on the production and export of sugar. Sugar cane is grown on 90% of the 106,000 hectares of cultivated land. In 1977, production of raw sugar was estimated at 715,000 tons. Approximately 28.9% of the economically active population is engaged in agriculture. Tobacco is also grown. However, most food must be imported, and industry is in an embryonic stage. In 1977, Mauritian foreign exchange reserves amounted to 68 million U.S. dollars and the balance of trade showed a deficit of almost 141 million dollars. Export of sugar accounted for more than two thirds of the total value of exports. The national budget for 1976 ended with a deficit of more than 70 million dollars. According to preliminary 1980 figures, the gross national product amounted to 450 million. The official currency is the Mauritian rupee, whose average rate of exchange in 1978 was 6.141 per U.S. dollar.

The Republic of South Africa controls directly or indirectly some 70% of the Mauritian economy.

Government: Mauritius is a member of the Commonwealth. The Queen is the titular sovereign and a Council of Ministers is responsible for the administration and control of the government. It consists of the Prime Minister and not more than 20 Ministers. Legislative power is vested in the Legislative Assembly of 70 members, 62 of whom are elected and 8 appointed. Elections are held every five years and are based on universal suffrage. Mauritian law is essentially based on French law with some elements of English law. The Supreme Court is made up of six judges.

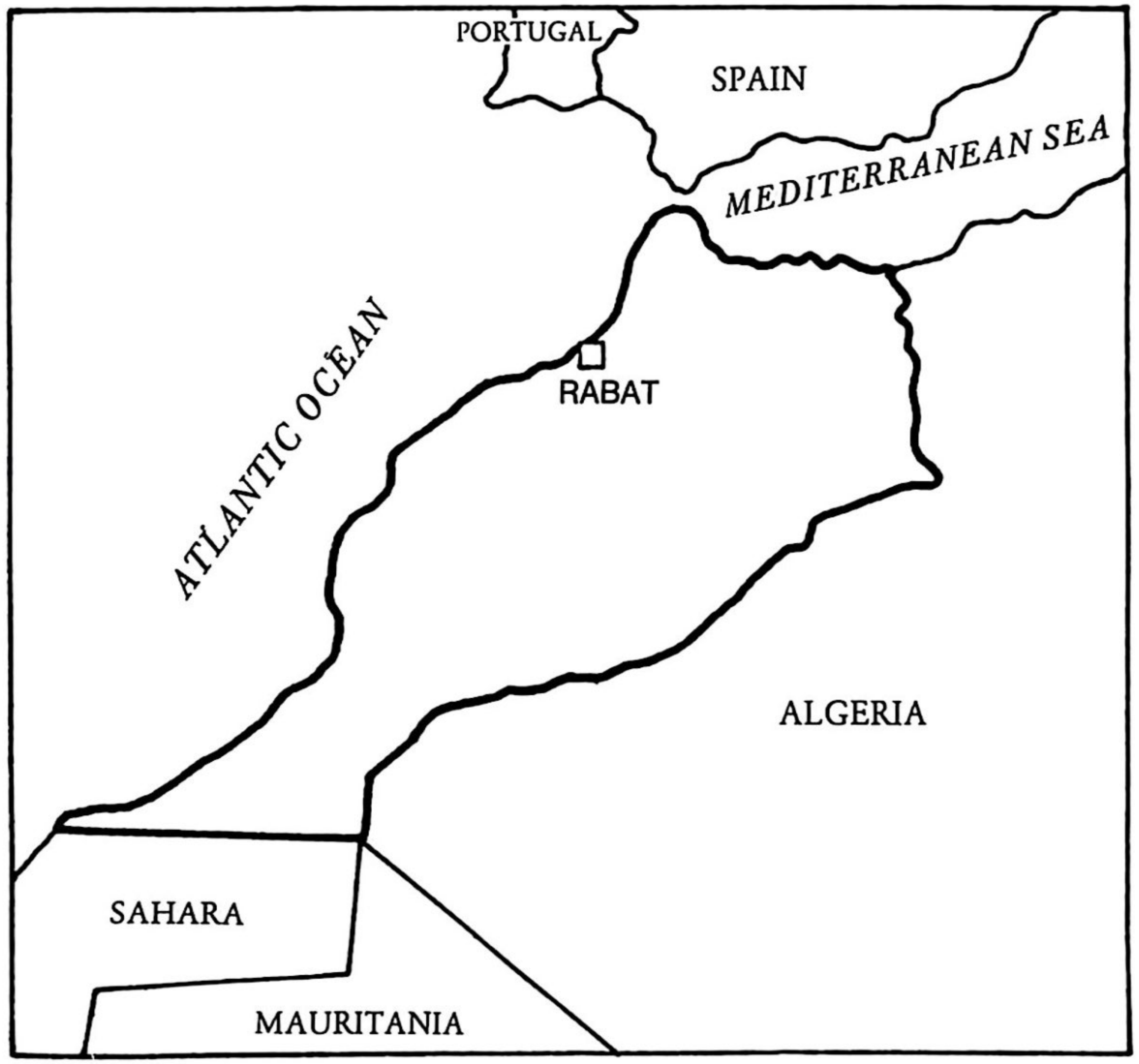
Organizations: The most important political parties are the Labour Party, which has been the ruling party since independence and forms a coalition with the Social Democratic Party and the Moslem Action Committee. The major opposition party is the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM), which associates the left.

Education: 39% of the population are illiterate. In the term 1975-1976, more than 145,000 children attended primary school. 25% of children attend secondary school. There is a university with 83 teachers and 1,096 students (1976 figures), but it is estimated that every year some 1,500 university students attend schools abroad.

Public health: There are 35 hospitals in Mauritius with 3,209 beds, 235 doctors, 14 dentists, and 971 nurses.

Religion: Hindus make up 52% of the population, 30% are Christians, 16% Moslems, and the rest are Buddhists and members of other religious denominations.

MOROCCO


PORTUGAL
SPAIN
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
RABAT
ALGERIA
SAHARA
MAURITANIA

Official name: The Kindom of Morocco.
Area: 445,900 sq.km.
Borders: Morocco is situated in the north-western part of the African continent, facing the Mediterranean sea in the north and the Atlantic Ocean in the west. It has a common frontier with Algeria in the east and south-east, and with the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic in the south.
Population: 18,906,000 inhabitants in 1978. 56% of the population live in rural reas. Its ethnic make-up is Berber and Arab. The average annual rate of population growth is 3.2%.
Capital: Rabat.
Principal cities: Casablanca, Marrakesh, Fez, Kenitra, Agadir and Tangiers.
Languages: Arabic is the official lanuage. French, Spanish and a number of Berber dialects are also spoken.
Public holidays: March 3, Festival of the Throne.
Geography: Morocco is mostly a mountainous country with an elevated, steep and tortuous relief. It has two mountain systems--the Atlas chains running almost parallel from the south-west to the north-east and consisting of the High Atlas, the Middle Atlas and the Anti-Atlas, and the Rif chain in the extreme north-west. The tallest peak in the Atlas system is the Djebel Foubkal, 4,165 m high, in the High Atlas. Towards the south-west these ranges extend towards the sea where they blend with highlands which gently slope down into vast plains. In the northest the Atlas ranges enter Algeria where they even out to form large, high-lying plateaus in the south and south-west of that country. In the south, the Atlas ranges descend to the arid and uninhabited highlands of the Sahara. The Rif range rises in the extreme northwest of Morocco and stretches to the Mediterranean Sea where its western outcrop forms a large arc projecting into the Straits of Gibraltar. The two systems—the Atlas and the Rif—are perfectly separated by what may be called the Fez gap.

Rivers are of extreme importance for agriculture in Morocco, especially those of the Atlantic watershed because they carry much water. The most prominent among them are the Sebu, which separates the Middle Atlas from the Rif and which is second only to the Nile in northern Africa as a supplier of water, the Beht, the Regreg, the Un Errebia, and the Sus. The rivers belonging to the Mediterranean watershed spring forth close to the coast, are short and torrential with the exception of the Muluya which rises in the snow-covered crest of the Middle Atlas and runs north-east before it empties into the sea close to the Algerian frontier.

The climate is warm and humid on the Atlantic coast in the north. On the mountain slopes and towards the interior the temperature rises and rainfall decreases until it almost disappears deep in the interior where the climate and the vegetation are of a typical desert character. The rainy season lasts from October to April. The average temperature in the summer is 27°C and in the winter 7°C.
Brief history: In 1150 B.C. the Phoenicians and later the Carthaginians established guard posts and commercial factories on the Moroccan coast. Still later the Romans arrived in northern Morocco and established there the province of Mauritania Tingitana in 44 A.D. In the year 429 the Vandals, coming from Spain, seized the territory, in 534 Belisarius reconquered it for Byzantium, but in 620 the Visigoths took it away from the Byzantines.

The Moslem invasion reached the territory of present-day Morocco in about 684 and initiated a gradual occupation of this area. The Berber tribes living there were converted to Islam and played a major role in the conquest of Spain.

A religious schism inside Islam gave rise to an ideology known as the Khawarij, which rejected all forms of political control to the point where it inspired large-scale uprisings in 739 that split the country into a number of Moslem principalities.

Years later, one of the local princes, Idris, launched a war of conquest and brought under his rule the other principalities in the region. He founded a powerful dynasty which ruled the country until the 9th century. His son Idris II founded the city of Fez, which became a commercial and cultural centre of the region. When Idris II died, his empire fell apart and the country was enveloped in tribal wars which lasted for two centuries.

A religious movement which grew among the Berbers living in the Sahara led to a religious war which unified the country under the rule of the Almoravids. The Almoravid realm attained the peak of its splendour under the rule of Emir Abu Bakr. After his death, Yusef ben Tashfin founded Marrakesh in 1062. Following the death of Ali Yusuf, a subsequent ruler of the Almoravid empire, in 1142, the empire went into rapid decay.

Another religious movement born in the Atlas mountains spread throughout the country and led to the founding of a new empire. The Almohades seized the last possessions of the Almoravids and after 22 years of fighting took Marrakesh in 1147.

However, the rule of the Almohades did not last long. Their empire soon found itself in a crisis and launched a war against the Merinids who after long years of fighting became the masters of the country.

In 1465, the country was torn by internal conficts which ended with the fall of the Merinids and the institution of the Wattasid dynasty of Zenata Berber origin, which ruled until 1559.

Spanish and Portuguese colonization began in the 16th century, but on a limited scale. The Wattasids scored little success in their attempt to contain the European colonization drive, and this caused their eventual downfall.

The Portuguese and Spanish incursion unified the different principalities which declared a holy war against the infidel. The Sharif Empire emerged from this war under the leadership of the Alawids; Sharif is the name given to members of the ruling dynasty in Morocco, who consider themselves to be descendants of Mohammed through his daughter Fatima. The Sharifs seized Fez in 1520 and Marrakesh in 1548, and in the battle of Alkazar Kebir in 1578, they decidedly routed the Portuguese.

It was the Alawid dynasty, the founders of the Sharif empire, whom the French encountered when they invaded the country.

The French conquest of Algeria in 1830 had its repercussions in Morocco. Mulay al Abd al Rahman, the Moroccan military leader, provided assistance to Abdel Kader, the Algerian Emir who had waged a protracted war of resistance against the French occupation. In the course of their campaign against Emir Kader the French defeated the Moroccans in 1844.

A dispute about the boundaries of the Ceuta enclave, a Spanish possession, led to a war between Morocco and Spain in 1860. The Spanish troops under the command of General O'Donnell defeated the Moroccans at Los Castillejos and took Tetuan. Under a peace agreement the enclave of Ceuta was enlarged, Spain was paid 100 million pesetas of indemnity, and was also given an enclave on Morocco's Atlantic coast, Santa Cruz de Mar Peguena (Ifini).

France was granted special privileges with respect to Morocco at the conference of the European powers in Algeciras in 1906. Later, in 1912, France and Spain signed an agreement fixing their spheres of influence in that country.

However, the total occupation of Moroccan territory was slow and costly for both European powers because of the resistance they encountered from the local inhabitants. France carried out the occupation between 1912 and 1934, while Spain did so between 1921 and 1926. In this territorial division the city of Tangiers was declared an intermediary zone under the jurisdiction of neither country.

However, the people of Morocco continued to wage a resistance struggle against the European colonialists. In 1920, the tribes in the Rif mountains began a war of national liberation under the leadership of Abd el Krim. A victory won by the Rif tribes over a Spanish army of 20,000 at Annual in 1921 greatly contributed to the formation of a military alliance of tribes in the national liberation war.

At the beginning of September 1921 the tribal nobility from the Rif region met at a conference which elected a National Assembly of the Rif, which proclaimed on September 19 of that year the Republic of the Rif and Abd el Krim as its President.

At the beginning, the army of the new republic had some 7,000 regulars and irregular tribal units which included all men 16 to 50 years old. However, in the course of time the Rif army increased in size to some 40,000 men.

Afraid that the example of the Rif Republic would spread to their zone of Morocco, the French colonialists seized by force the fertile Ouerrah Valley, the granary of the Rif, in an attempt at provoking a war with the Rif army and of defeating it.

The Rif leaders considered the situation created by the French and agreed that the occupation of Ouerrha would lead to the starvation of the inhabitants of the mountains. Therefore, the Rif army launched an offensive against the French, which lasted from April to July 1925, and which was supported by an uprising staged by different tribes in the French zone of Morocco.

Faced by the advance of the Rif army, Spain and France signed a military agreement in July 1925 on the sea and land blockade of the Republic of the Rif. Following that, the war began to turn in favour of the European powers because of their superiority in arms and men.

Equipped with the latest weapons, the European army counted 400,000 men who were supported by tanks and warplanes, an overwhelming preponderance over the poorly armed Rif troops.

During the autumn campaign, the Rif army began to lose the territory it had controlled up to the summer of that year. Adjdir, the capital of the Republic of the Rif, fell to the Spanish troops after a violent battle.

Meanwhile, in France, Spain and other European countries workers staged many protest demonstrations against the war in Morocco and in support of the Republic of the Rif. The French Communist Party and other progressive organizations formed an Action Committee to support the republic of the Moroccan rebels.

The situation on the battlefornt and progressive world public opinion forced the European powers to negotiate with the Rif Republic which had proposed a peace treaty on the basis of recognition of its independence. However, the European delegates at the peace conference held from April to May 1926 at Oujda manoeuvred so as to convince public opinion that the Rif Republic did not want peace. Thus they presented to the Rif delegates a number of ultimatums to disarm the Moroccan troops and to include the territory they controlled in the protectorate.

Hostilities resumed in May 1926 and by the end of that month Abd el Krim was forced to go into exile. The Republic of the Rif thus ceased to exist.

The resistance struggle against colonialism assumed new characteristics in 1930. The growth—though gradual—of the local proletariat and bourgeoisie shifted the focal point of the resistance to the cities which had also grown by an influx of Bedouins.

Some years earlier, in 1920, the French Communist Party organized a section in Morocco, made up of French workers resident there and of progressive Moroccans. This organization gained in strength in the 1930s and became the standard-bearer of the anti-colonial struggle.

The world economic crisis from 1929 to 1933 strongly influenced the radicalization of those sectors of the population most affected by the crisis, and they joined the struggle against European colonialism.

In order to undermine this struggle, the French colonial administration sowed discord between the Arabs and the Berbers who constituted 60% and 40% of the population respectively.

A Berber Decree issued on May 16, 1930, deprived the sultan's judicial body of its prerogatives relating to the traditional courts, which passed under the jurisdiction of the French authorities. The promulgation of this decree aroused both the Arab and Berber communities and led to large-scale demonstrations in a number of towns. These protest demonstrations were suppressed by the protectorate's authorities and their principal leaders were jailed. Since then, May 16 has been marked as a day of sorrow.

The struggle continued, this time led by a group of intellectuals who decided to publish a weekly newspaper, People's Action, which appeared for the first time in February 1934. Published in French, it was opposed to the subordination of the country to the French Ministry of Colonies and demanded that Moroccan affairs should be handled by the French Foreign Minister. Although their demands were moderate in character, the group's programme was too radical for the French authorities which eventually banned the newspaper.

It was in this period, too, when the Moroccan Action Committee was founded and drew up a reform programme aimed at limitation of the French protectorate over Morocco and calling for a national parliament and government. This committee, established in 1934, was prohibited by the French authorities in 1937.

New political parties came into being at the end of the 1930s—the National Reform Party, headed by Allal el Fassi, and the National Movement Party, organized by Mohammed Ouazzani. Both were illegal. The first one favoured absolute powers for the sultan, while the latter party called for a parliamentary form of government.

In the Spanish-dominated part of Morocco, the progressive forces were opposed to the alliance formed between the feudal elements and the Spanish general, Francisco Franco, who in 1936 assumed the post of Spanish High Commissioner in Morocco and used the country as a base for launching his attack against the Spanish Republic.

In January 1944, after Moroccan territory had been used as a battlefield by Axis and Allied forces, some members of the National Party and the National Action Bloc formed the nationalist Istiqlal Party.

This move marked the beginning of the struggle for Moroccan independence, which after the fall of the Rif Republic had followed a reformist course. Nevertheless, the Istiqlal Party's programme of struggle envisaged a monarchy as the form of the future government.

France plotted to dissolve the Istiqlal and encouraged Thami Al Olaoui to stir up the feudal nobility against the sultan. On August 20, 1953, the French Resident General (Governor) deposed Sultan Mohammed V who was first exiled to Corsica and then Madagascar. In a simultaneous move, the French banned the Istiqlal and formed an organization to replace it.

A series of demonstrations against the French measures in August 1955 produced a critical situation in the country, which forced France to negotiate with Mohammed V who then returned to head the government.

After the enactment of the *Loi cardre* (the Framework Law), whereby the French National Assembly provided for the gradual autonomy of French-held territories, the Paris government decided to abolish the protectorate in Morocco and to recognize the country's independence which was then proclaimed on March 2, 1956. However, French troops remained in Morocco until 1963 when they were withdrawn on the basis of agreements signed between the two countries.

Differences arose within the Istiqlal Party, which led to the emergence of two trends splitting it—the traditionalist faction headed by the moderate intellectual leaders Balafrej and Allal al Fassi, and a radical left headed by Mehdi Ben Barka.

An Istiqulal government with Balafrej as Premier began functioning in May 1958, but several months later lost its stability and Balafrej resigned. A new government was formed by the radical wing of the party with Abdallah Ibrahim, Ben Barka's close collaborator, as Premier. In the same year of 1959 Ibrahim legalized the Moroccan Communist Party.

The differences within the Istiqlal Party grew ever more acute. Ben Barka broke with Istiqlal in January 1959 and began to organize the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP) which was then established in September 1959.

The progressive government led by Ibrahim ran into differences with the monarchy and for this reason was dismissed in March 1960. Ibrahim then joined the UNFP.

After the dismissal of the Ibrahim government, Mohammed V appointed himself Prime Minister and his son, Crown Prince Moulay Hassan, Counsellor to the Throne. After his father had died, the Prince came to the throne as Hassan II on February 26, 1961.

In 1959, the Moroccan government proclaimed its territorial ambitions under the slogan of "Great Morocco", laying claim to sovereignty over parts of southwestern Algeria, Western Sahara, Mauritania and Mali.

These Moroccan territorial claims provoked at the end of 1963 a conflict with Algeria, known as the Desert War, which ended after negotiations between the two belligerents.

A student protest in Casablanca in March 1965 was supported by the workers and led to a large-scale demonstration criticizing corruption in the royal government and administrative mismanagement. Royal troops attacked the demonstrators and killed or wounded many of them.

In October 1965, the UNFP leader Ben Barka left for Havana via Paris to attend the Tricontinental Conference which was to meet in the Cuban capital early in 1966 and of whose preparatory committeee he was the chairman. On his arrival in Paris, the Moroccan leader was abducted and murdered by a group headed by General Mohammed Oufkir, Morocco's supreme military leader.

A political crisis shook the Moroccan government between 1967 and 1968, producing eight cabinet changes.

New parliamentary elections were held in July 1970, for which the Istiqlal and UNFP created a National Front. A new constitution was submitted to the voters for approval at the same time. Of the 240 elected members, 158 belonged to an independent group of a realistic trend, 60 adhered to the government People's Party, and 22 belonged to opposition parties.

Two attempted coups were frustrated by the government in 1971 and 1972. The latter was headed by General Mohammed Oufkir who at that time was Morocco's Minister of Defence and Chief-of-Staff. Oufkir, who had gained notoriety for his direct involvement in the abduction and murder of Ben Barka, was killed after the abortive coup.

A second constitution was enacted on March 1, 1972, under which Morocco is a "constitutional, democratic and social monarchy" in which legislative power is vested in a Chamber of Representatives elected under universal suffrage for a term of four years.

Although it had recognized the national identity of the Saharan people on a number of occasions when it signed different agreements with Algerian and Mauritanian leaders during the Spanish colonial possession of the Western Sahara, in November 1975 Morocco launched a military demonstration called the Green March. A column of Moroccan troops left Tarfaya and penetrated fifteen kilometeres into Saharan territory.

Six days after the beginning of the Green March, Morocco withdrew its troops from the territory when Spain promised to turn its colony over to Morocco. A tripartite agreement between Spain, Morocco and Mauritania was signed in Madrid on November 14, 1976, under which the Franco regime surrendered the Western Sahara to Morocco and Mauritania. The agreements signed in Madrid were supplemented with fishery conventions granting Spain the right to exploit the waters off the Western Sahara coast.

After the occupation of the Western Sahara, Morocco entered a stage of military intervention on the African continent. Thus, in 1977, 1,500 Moroccan soliders were airlifted in French planes to Zaire's Shaba province to crush an insurgency there. After the conflict in Shaba was over, the Moroccan troops were withdrawn, but a number of military instructors were left behind to train troops of the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko.

As the POLISARIO Front in the Western Sahara stepped up its struggle for liberation, Morocco stationed 9,000 soldiers in Mauritania in order to help the government maintain the occupation of its sector of the former Rio de Oro.

When the Mauritanian regime of Mokhtar Ould Daddah was overthrown in March 1978, the Moroccans remained in the country in spite of the fact that POLISARIO had unilaterally proclaimed a cease-fire with Mauritania in order to facilitate progress in negotiations secretly held up to then without achieving any positive results towards the settlement of the conflict.

In July 1978, at the summit conference of the Organization of African Unity in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, Morocco rejected the idea of independence for the Western Sahara and re-iterated its intransigent and bellicose position regarding Saharan territory.

In the middle of 1978, the economic crisis gripping Morocco grew still more acute. The official daily, Maroc Soir, noted in an editorial that the country was entering a new and acute stage after the feeling of unity, generated by the so-called Green March into the Sahara had been dissipated. Other media pointed to the military expenditures on the Sahara conflict as being the principal cause of the economic crisis in addition to an unprecedented number of strikes in the mining, food, tourist and railway industries.

The Military Committee which had seized power in Mauritania in 1978 signed a peace treaty with POLISARIO on August 5, 1979, and recognized the right of the Saharan people to self-determination.

In 1979, the United States granted new military credits to Morocco, as the economic and social situation continued deteriorating due to the war in the Western Sahara. A number of Moroccan military setbacks were reported in clashes with POLISARIO forces.

In July 1980, the world press reported that Moroccan planes had bombed Mauritanian territory. At the same time, reports spoke of serious defeats for Moroccan troops in the fighting with POLISARIO forces all through 1980, while the living standard of the Moroccan people rapidly deteriorated partly due to the fact that the government of Hassan II has been using the country's economy and the assistance received from the United States, France and Saudi Arabia to cover the expenditures on the costly war against the Saharan people.

At the beginning of 1981, the French Premier visited Morocco with the aim of strengthening political and commercial ties between the two countries, as well as their military cooperation. In February, the United States announced new deliveries of Amercan military equipment—M-60 tanks, reconnaissance planes and helicopters—to Morocco.

In the same month, the National Union of Moroccan Students (UEM) called a general strike, supported by the teachers and provoked by the serious economic situation in the country. At the University of Fez, the police suppressed the strikers, killing two and wounding many other students.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the two key sectors of Morocco's economy. Morocco is the world's foremost exporter and third major producer of phosphate, of which it produced 20,156,100 tons in 1978. One third of the country's total exports consists of this commodity. Also in 1978, Morocco's mining industry produced 62,900 tons of iron ore, 126,200 tons of manganese ore, 8,700 tons of cobalt ore, 5,300 tons of antimony, 720,000 tons of coal, 24,300 tons of crude petroleum, and 46,000,000 cu.m of natural gas.

60% of the economically active population work in agriculture which produced in 1978—according to FAO figures—1,876,000 tons of wheat, 2,328,000 tons of barley, 390,000 tons of maize, 300,000 tons of olives, 650,000 tons of citrus fruit, 73,000 tons of dates, 215,000 tons of grapes, and smaller quantities of millet, oats, rye and sorghum.

The same data list 2,907,000 head of cattle, 15,272,000 sheep, 5,972,000 goats, and 96,000 camels. The 1978 fish catch was 285,000 tons. Timber production in 1977 was 3,252,000 cu.m. According to the 1978 FAO figures, Morocco's industry produced 2,614,000 tons of cement, 3,679,000 kWh of electric power, 184,800 tons of phosphate fertilizers, 980,000 hectolitres of wine, and 32,000 tons of olive oil.

According to available data, 45% of urban workers and 60% of landless peasants have no jobs. In addition, half a million Moroccans are working as immigrant workers in Western Europe. Five per cent of landowners possessed 55% of all land in 1978, and in the same year more than two million individuals lived in slums on the outskirts of cities and towns.

The 1978 balance of trade ended with a deficit due to the fact that imports worth 12,361,000,000 dirhams were not covered by the 6,261,000,000 dirhams worth of exports. In the same year, Morocco's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 649,000,000 dollars. At the beginning of 1980 Morocco's inflation rate exceeded 15%, its trade deficit had risen to 1,517,000,000 dollars, and its national budget continued to be overburdened by military expenditures.

The national currency is the dirham, the exchange rate of which at the beginning of 1980 was 3.87 per U.S. dollar. Morocco's external public debt in 1975 amounted to 2,461,000,000 dollars.

Morocco's economic prospects have been judged very sombrely by the professional African press, in particular because of stagnating citrus production, a drop in the price of phosphate and the growing military budget.

46% of Morocco's population live below the absolute poverty level, as reported by the World Bank, while a minority is living in opulence.

In the first quarter of 1981, Morocco received from the International Monetary Fund a loan of 1,000,000,000 dollars. This was at the very time when the World Bank issued a report confirming that agriculture, the country's principal economic activity, had progressed at the annual rate of a mere 2% since independence.

The same report noted that Morocco's large imports of wheat and sugar were not offset by exports of fruit and vegetables, and that manufactured products represented only a third of its exports. It also pointed out that Morocco's balance of payments and balance of trade were "highly deficient".

In 1980, Saudi Arabia granted Morocco financial assistance of more than 1,000,000,000 dollars, mainly for arms purchases.

In 1981, Morocco was expected to double its cereal imports—to approximately 3,000,000 metric tons—according to an official announcement.

Armed forces: Morocco's armed forces consist of some 98,000 men of whom 90,000 serve in the army, 6,000 in the air force, and 2,000 in the navy. Paramilitary units have an additional 30,000 men in arms (1979 figures). The 1979 military budget amounted to 917,000,000 dollars, i.e. 16.8% of the total budgetary expenditures.

Unconfirmed figures for 1980 show an increase in the size of Morocco's armed forces to 120,000 men and the spending of 250,000 dollars a day on the war against the Saharan people. According to the same sources, 375,000,000 dollars were spent in 1980 on the modernization of Morocco's rmy.

Military service is compulsory and lasts 18 months. There are U.S. military bases on Moroccan territory.

Government: Morocco is a constitutional monarchy with a presidential type of government. The cabinet consists of 19 ministers, while the parliament has 275 members (since 1977), of whom the great majority belong to the party which supports the royal regime.

The constitution dates from 1962, was approved in a referendum held in 1972, and went into effect in 1977.

Both foreign and domestic policies are set by the King.

Organizations: There are a number of political parties in Morocco, both in support of and in opposition to the monarchy. The Istiqlal, founded in 1943, is the oldest political organization in the country among those in existence. Its Secretary General is Mohammed Boucetta and it has two newspapers—Al Alam and L'Opinion.

A split within the Istiqulal in 1959, and the separation of that party's left wing gave rise to the National Union of Popular Forces (UNFP), which was founded by Mehdi Ben Barka.

The People's Movement, a party led by Mahjoubi Aliaidan, was founded in the same year.

In 1972, the UNFP split into the so-called Casablanca and Rabat groups. The former retained the name of the UNFP, while the latter adopted the name of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP). Its Secretary General is Abdurrahim Bouabid.

The other Moroccan political parties include the Party of Progress and Socialism—a new name chosen by the Communist Party—and the Socialist Revolution Party (PRS).

There are two workers' organizations in Morocco: the General Union of Moroccan Workers (UGTM), controlled by the Istiqlal Party, whose General Secretary is Abderrazzak Afilal and which was founded in 1960, and the Moroccan Labour Union (UMT), founded in 1955 and affiliated to the Pan—African Trade Union Association. The UMT has 650,000 members.

Morocco's only student organization is the National Union of Moroccan Students (UNEM).

Culture, education and sports: Moroccan culture has been enriched but also divided along linguistic lines by competition between the classical Arabic, which is the official language, the vernacular Arabic and Berber (Tamazight), and French which is at present the language used for science instruction.

Moroccan literature reflects these divisions. Popular literature, which continues to be very lively, expresses the values cherished by the Berbers. It has an oral tradition and its current manifestations are to be found in short stories, songs, and love and satirical poetry. Literature written in the Arabic, which had been affected by Oriental influences, has now taken a different course in which poetry has broken the rules of the old rhetoric and which has embraced such forms of expression as the novel—although here it has run into problems with publication and distribution—or the short story which has found a wide scope for publication in literary journals and periodicals. Moroccan literature writtten in French has many fine works and distinguished authors.

Painting and sculpture have undergone great development since independence. The Municipal School of Fine Arts in Casablanca is striving to revitalize the artistic traditions of the country. At the same time, the government, which is endeavouring to preserve Morocco's rich and varied folklore, is sponsoring an annual folklore festival in Marrakesh.

The theatre is subsidized both by local authorities and by private organizations in Casablanca and Jadida, as well as by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Sports and Youth.

The Department of Culture is responsible for archives, maintains and reconstructs historical monuments, sponsors art exhibitions, and awards the "Morocco Prize" for literature, social sciences and exact sciences.

The Association of Moroccan Writers, which has its branches in the principal cities, is striving to disseminate Morocco's new literature in collaboration with similar associations in the Maghreb and other Arab countries.

Education is compulsory for children from 7 to 13 years old. However, only about 50% of these children do in fact attend classes, and girls leave school earlier than boys. Only about 1.5% of children have the possibility of completing primary education, and only 20% to 23% of them graduate from secondary school. Morocco has two universities. All teachers in the primary schools are Moroccans, but in the secondary schools there are approximately 7,000 French teachers. 84% of the population is illiterate.

In the school term 1977-1978 there were 1,793,772 pupils attending primary schools, 582,197 students attending secondary schools, and 77,400 students were enrolled in higher educational institutions.

Several newspapers are published in French—Le Matin du Sahara, Maroc Soir and L'Opinion, whose edition varies from 10,000 to 15,000 copies. The principal Arab newspapers are Al Alam and El Djarida.

The national sport is football, but tennis and skiing are also quite popular.

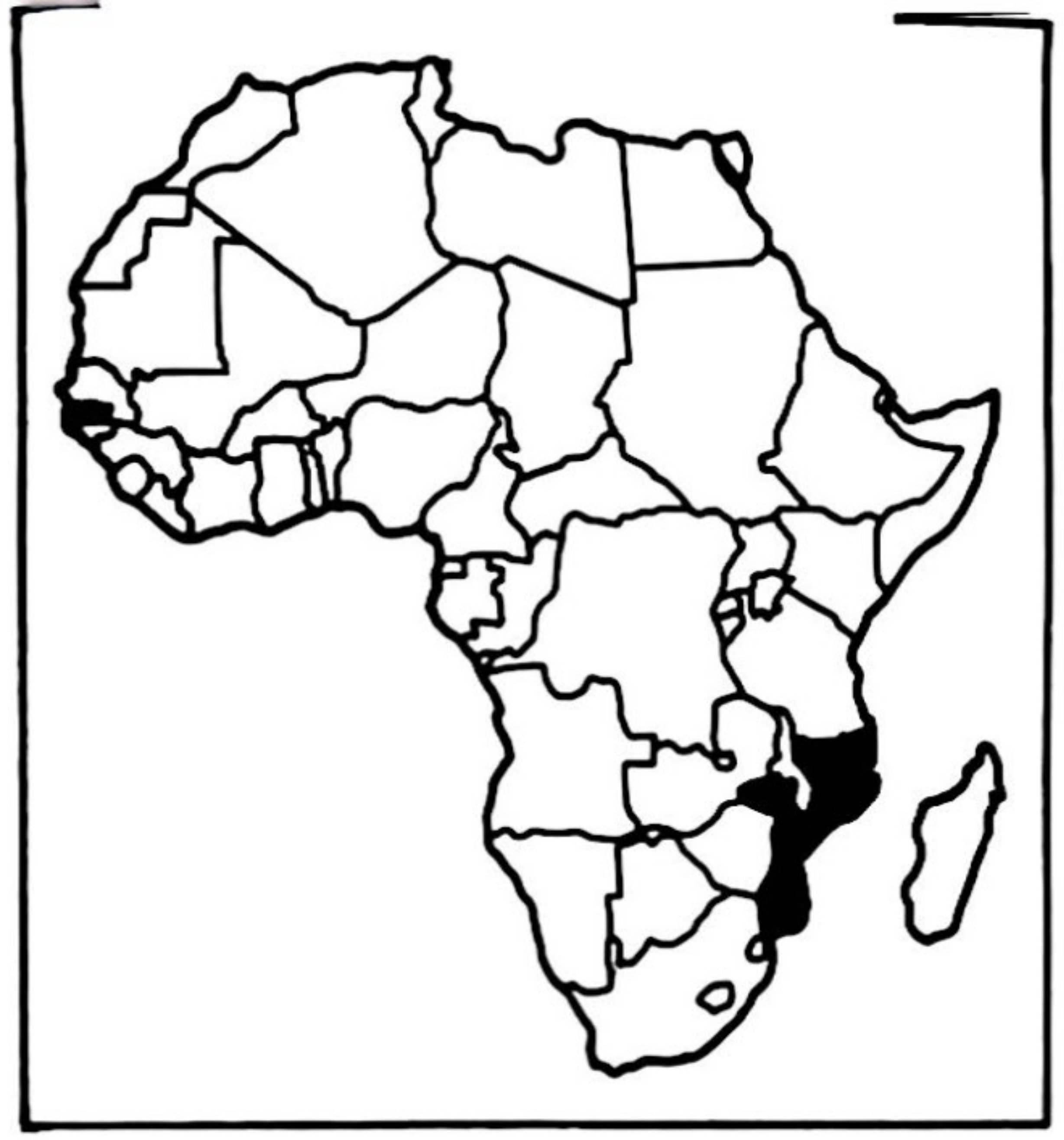
Public health: Public health services are under the competence of the Ministries of Public Health, Labour, and Youth and Sports. These services benefit largely the urban population only, especially the middle class. The same cannot be said of rural families and other sectors of the population.

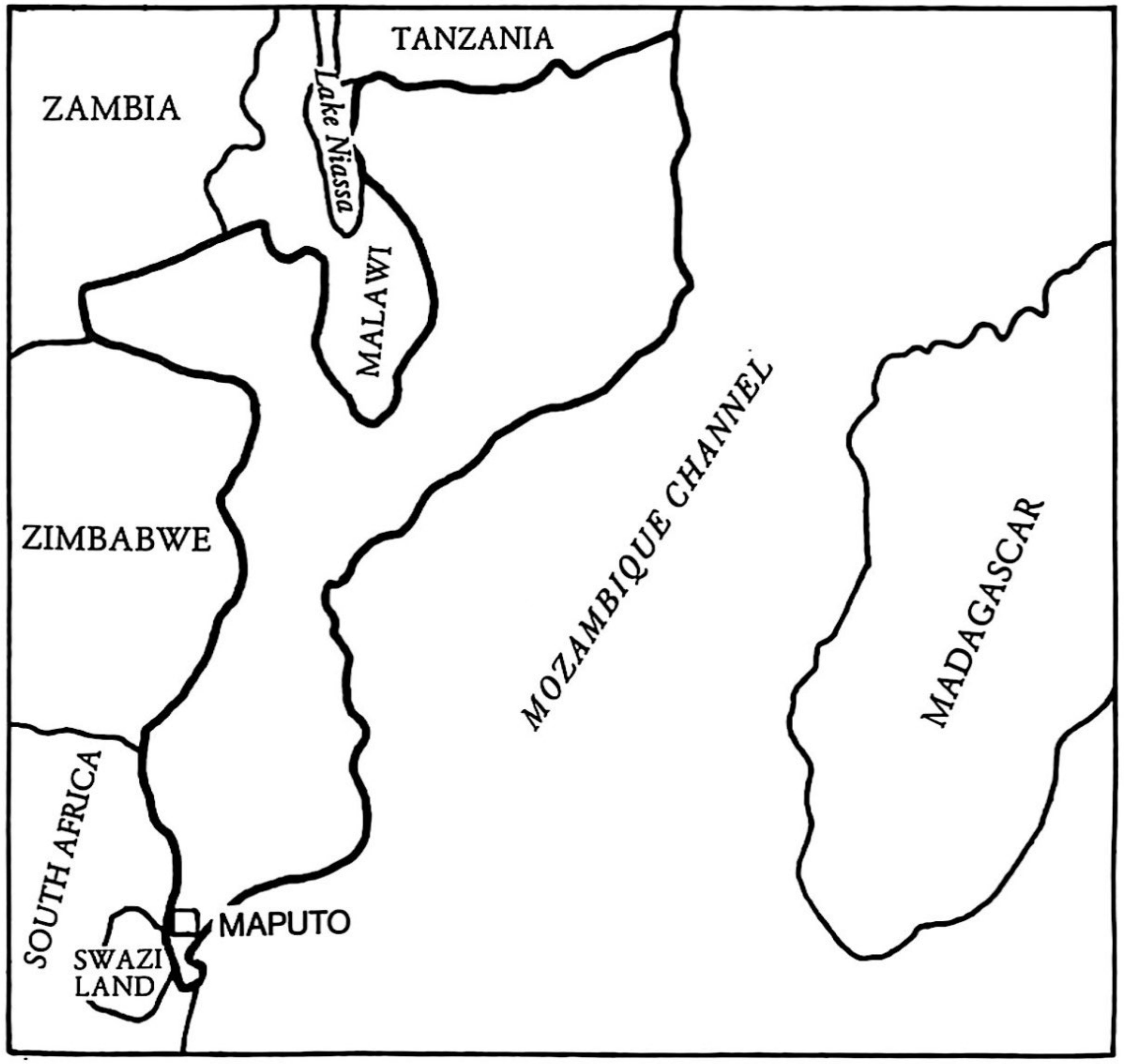
Only a small number of doctors graduate from the School of Medicine at Rabat. Approximately two million children suffer from malnutrition.

There is only one doctor for every 13,000 inhabitants in Morocco, and one hospital bed for every 700 inhabitants. The average life expectancy is 51.4 years for men and 54.5 years for women (1970-1975).

Religion: The majority of the population are Moslems. However, there are also Christian and Hebrew religious minorities.

MOZAMBIQUE





Official name: The People's Republic of Mozambique.
Area: 783,030 sq.km.
Borders: Mozambique has a coast of 2,795 km on the Indian Ocean, which forms its eastern frontier. In the northwest it borders on Malawi, in the west on Zambia and Zimbabwe, in the southwest on South Africa, and in the south on Swaziland.
Population: According to 1977 figures, Mozambique had a population of 9,680,000. The average population density was 12 people per sq.km, while the annual rate of population growth was 2.3%.

The majority of the African population of the country belongs to the Bantu ethnic and language group. Within that group there are four large tribal groupings: the Tonga in the south, who were strongly influenced by the Zulus, the warrior tribe of southern Africa, the Karanga, who inhabit Mozambique's savanna and woods, the Nhanga, settled in the Zambezi Valley and the highlands around Lake Malawi, and the Macua, who live in the north of the coastal area between the rivers Zambezi and Rovuma.

The population also includes Portuguese, Asians and a relatively high number of individuals of mixed blood.

Capital: Maputo (400,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Beira, Quelimane, and Nampula.
Languages: Portuguese is the official language, while Macua is the country's main African dialect. Also spoken are variations of Swahili, especially in the north.
Public holidays: June 25, Independence Day.
Geography: Most of Mozambique is a relatively low plateau extending along the eastern coast of Africa, which gently slopes down to a narrow coastal strip along the Indian Ocean. It has an advantageous geographical position as a gateway to the sea for the countries lying further west in the interior of the continent, either by way of the large rivers which pass through its territory from the west to the east and the Indian Ocean, or by railway or highways built during the period of Portuguese colonial domination. Mozambique's highest elevations are Mt. Binga (2,436 m) and the Zuria range which reaches an altitude of 2,227 m, both deep inside the country near its frontiers with Zambia, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Mozambique has a coastline of 2,795 km and a land frontier of 4,450 km.

Its 25 rivers empty in to the Indian Ocean. The most important of them is the Zambezi, which it shares with Zambia and which is navigable for a distance of 460 km. The main ports are Maputo and Beira, although there are several other small ports as well, used by coastal shipping.

Mozambique has a tropical climate with plentiful rainfall. There is a dry season in the winter, but only in the high-lying areas where the atmospheric conditions are more favourable. The dominant climatic features are the equatorial low-pressure areas and tropical trade winds.

Brief history: The formation of city states in Central and Southern Africa—the Congo basin, the East African lakes, and South Africa—was a slow and little-known process. This area entered history with the use of iron and diversification of cultivated crops in the era when the Bantu peoples emerged and achieved considerable progress through their own economic, social and cultural development, as well as through an active and prosperous trade established in the course of many years with Asia Minor, India, and the Near East. Sofala, on the territory of present-day Mozambique, became one of the points where the Asian merchants congregated as well as one of the most frequented commercial centres in Africa of that period.

The Portuguese navigator Pedro de Covilham was the first European to visit at the end of the 1480s different places along the eastern coast of Africa, including Sofala, which at that time was an Arab possession exporting gold coming from the state of Monomotapa on the territory of today's Zimbabwe. This fact was noted by King Alfonso of Portugal, called "the African", who mustered an expedition under the command of Vasco Da Gama for the purpose of establishing contact with the Arab possessions on Africa's eastern coast. After having sailed around the Cape of Good Hope, the Portuguese navigator visited Sofala and then proceeded to India. On his return voyage in 1498 he stopped over in Quelimane in order to explore its vicinity.

The Portuguese succeeded in establishing their first trading post in Mozambique in 1503. Two years later, Pedro de Anaya conquered Sofala which was turned into the fortified centre of this Portuguese colony. In 1507, Tristan da Cunha occupied and fortified the island of Mozambique.

The Portuguese conquests provoked Arab resistance, but the technological superiority of the Portuguese prevailed. By 1520, Portugal had succeded in seizing all the principal ports and settlements along Africa's southeastern coast, which permitted it to engage in large-scale trade with gold and slaves. In 1544 the Portuguese opened a large new port in Quelimane.

Once firmly established on the coast, the Portuguese set out to penetrate the interior, in particular the area of Manica which, they knew, was rich in gold.

In the northern part of today's Mozambique--on the territory bordered in the north by the Ruvuma River, in the west by Lake Nyasa, in the south by the Zambezi, and in the east by the Indian Ocean—the main role in the conflicts which took place in the 16th century between the Arabs already occupying the area and the Portuguese who wanted to displace them was played by two African tribes, the Macua and the Mazimba.

The Macua were most actively involved in defensive wars which freed the natives living in that area, and the centuries to follow held their positions against the Arabs and the Portuguese, thus winning a distinguished place in the later history of East Africa.

The Mazimba led for a time the struggle against both the Arabs and the Portuguese, and fought against other native tribes, but disappeared some time in the 17th century. Propably the Mazimba realm, a wartime and peacetime alliance of several tribes between the 16th and 18th centuries, fell apart under the impact of the Bantu migration from southern Africa, which reached the area in the first half of the 19th century. Historians believe that the tribes forming the Mazimba confederation settled in different areas and resumed their original names. Nevertheless, between 1572 and 1592, the Mazimba held in check the Portuguese and prevented them from fortifying themselves in the interior of Mozambique.

Already in 1609, the Portuguese possessions in Africa were separated from one another and each had its own governor. In the first half of the 17th century, Mozambique became the principal Portuguese slave-trading base in East Africa.

In the second half of the 17th century, a bitter struggle developed between the Portuguese and the Arabs for the control of the territory. In 1698, Portugal had lost to the Arabs all its forts north of Mozambique. The Arab position in East Africa was consolidated in the 19th century, extending along the whole length of the coast from Mogadishu in Somalia to Cabo Delgado in Mozambique.

In the early 19th century, Great Britain took steps to extend her influence to the areas of East Africa under Arab control and by the middle of that century began to send missionaries, explorers and other government agents into the interior of this part of Africa. Thus, Portugal had to cope for several decades not only with the Arabs, but also with British designs.

Since the partition of Africa by the colonial powers at the time of the Berlin Conference in 1884, Portugal worked hard to consolidate its position in its African dominions. It turned them into settlers' colonies and gradually introduced there a plantation economy. In those areas, where the power of the traditional chiefs was strong, the Portuguese used methods typical of that era—'friendship' treaties, provocations, direct military operations, whatever was most expedient in each case. Beginning in 1900, Portugal was in the position to pursue a truly colonial policy. The Governor-General was the cornerstone of that policy which was implemented vertically through provincial governors and district officers, who supervised the work of so-called local chiefs appointed from among Africans suited for colonial administration.

In the early decades of this century, the foundations were laid for an economy which supplied both the needs of the metropolitan country, that had become a second-rank colonial power, and and those of South Africa which was growing in stature as the economic nucleus and dominant political factor of the region. Moreover, Mozambique became an outlet for Rhodesian copper, eased the pressure on south African ports, and served as a gateway for goods imported by the Rhodesias.

After World War II, political organizations emerged underground or in exile, striving for independence. The Portuguese authorities responded by imprisoning their leaders and by increasing the strength of their colonial army to 40,000 men. They also built new military bases at strategic points throughout the territory.

In 1961, the Portuguese government formally changed the political status of its colonies, defining them as "overseas provinces", in order to avoid the obligation to submit to the United Nations reports on the situation there. In the same year, a Governor-General with both civilian and military authority assumed his duties in Mozambique.

The anti-colonial struggle gained cohesion and political character following the formation of the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) in June 1962.

The Central Committee of FRELIMO decided to proceed with armed struggle in 1964, when on the 25th of September an attack was staged on a police station in Cabo Delgado province. The military operations quickly spread to Niassa, Zambezia and Tete. In the Cabo Delgado and Niassa provinces the guerilla operations met with successs, while in Zambezia and Tete they ran into difficulty because of adverse supply conditions and concentration of colonial interests in these two provinces. These factors caused a temporary recess in the guerilla war there.

Four years later, in March 1968, FRELIMO succeeded in establishing the conditions for resuming the guerilla war in Tete province. The base of popular support had been solidly built and the enemy had to cope with the problems facing a regular army which must fight guerillas and operate in hostile territory. The importance of the resumption of fighting in Tete for both adversaries was evident, for at that time the Cabora Bassa Dam was being built there with French, West German, Italian and South African capital participation, which when completed would become Africa's largest and the fifth largest in the world as regards its power-generating capacity. The dam was intended to supply South Africa with water for its industry and plantations in the Transvaal, which its own resources could not provide in sufficient quantity.

Portugal had been promised assistance from South Africa in its colonial war, just as from its NATO allies whom it had asked for help in order to prosecute the war which it could not do on its own. Mozambique was to have remained Portuguese so as to continue protecting South Africa's northeastern flank and in order to keep it in the world capitalist orbit.

From June 20 to 25, 1968, FRELIMO held its second congress in the liberated area of Niassa province. Besides reviewing the progress of the liberation war and its further course, the meeting adopted measures for strengthening the socio-economic and military organization of the inhabitants of the liberated areas, who were the first to benefit from the implementation of the FRELIMO programme of revolutionary changes.

On February 3, 1969, FRELIMO suffered a blow when its president and founder, Eduardo Mondlane, was assassinated. A Presidential Committee was then created with Uriah Simango, Marcelino dos Santos and Samora Machel. When Simango had been expelled soon thereafter because of his betrayal of the revolutionary cause, the committee was re-organized. Samora Machel became its President and Marcelino dos Santos Vice-President.

The FRELIMO fighters opened a fourth front in 1972 in the Manica and Sofala provinces, which constituted a region considered of "vital importance". Following this, Rhodesian and South African mercenaries joined the Portuguese troops in anti-guerilla operations.

December 31, 1973, marked the beginning of the last stage of the guerilla war with an attack on the railway linking Rhodesia with the Mozambican port of Beira. A number of represssive groups operated throughout the country, which committed massacres of the civilian population. There were also other units, recruited from among the civilian African population for the purpose of "protecting strategic villages", as well as the International Police for the Defence of the State (PIDE), which later adopted the name General Directorate of Security (DGS).

When the Armed Forces Movement in Portugal overthrew the fascist regime on April 25, 1974, guerilla activities were intensified. FRELIMO and Portugal signed an agreement recognizing Mozambique's independence in Lusaka, Zambia, on September 7, 1974. Immediately thereafter, ultra-reactionary elements in Mozambique provoked disorders to intimidate the population, cause economic chaos, and paralyse the country through an exodus of the white population, in particular the professionals needed for the development of the country.

When FRELIMO assumed power, Mozambique was a country with 90% illiteracy, without any medical assistance in the rural areas, and with the peasant population forced to live in makeshift huts. The country's economy was dependent on South Africa and Rhodesia, and many Portuguese, as they left the former colony, destroyed their factories, agricultural facilities and machinery.

A major negative factor was the massive exodus of technical and professional personnel. Those who left the country were mainly Europeans who had had easy access to higher education during the colonial era.

On June 25, 1975, the day when independence was proclaimed, Samora Machel declared that the construction of a socialist society would permit the restoration of Mozambique's personality in a harmonious and constructive form. On June 26, a new constitution was proclaimed, and on February 3, 1976, the capital of Lourenco Marques was renamed Maputo.

On February 28, 1976, the 8th plenary session of the FRELIMO Central Committee convened the party's Third Congress and set its date for February 1977. The theses of that congress, the first one to be held after independence, were submitted to the public for discussion, so that the people's suggestions could be considered.

After a great majority of the people had discussed the theses, the congress opened in Maputo on February 3, 1977. The session, which was attended by more than 200 delegates —40% of them blue-collar workers, 27% peasants, and 33% workers from different sectors—proclaimed FRELIMO a vanguard Marxist-Leninist political organization. Among the objectives raised by the congress, the new party limited its membership to individuals who possess firm class consciousness, ideological steadfastness and revolutionary spirit.

The congress underlined the need of intensified study of the scientific revolutionary theory "as a guide for action in the difficult process of forming the bases for the construction of a socialist society". It decided to establish organizations of women, workers and peasants, especially in individual villages and communities, cooperatives and other institutions. In order to ensure the formation of a people's democracy, President Machel announced that general elections would be held in February 1978 to constitute a People's Assembly. The Third Congress of FRELIMO elected a Central Committee of 67 members, which, in turn, elected a standing political committee (Political Bureau) of nine members, charged with the task of leading the party until its Fourth Congress.

Mozambique has followed a foreign policy of non-alignment and is a member of the Organization of African States. Together with Zambia, Botswana, Tanzania and Angola, it belongs to the Front Line States, a group created for the purpose of assisting diplomatically and militarily the national liberation movement in Zimbabwe and in southern Africa as a whole. The militant aid provided by Mozambique to the liberation movement in Zimbabwe during its war of independence, as a base for ZANU, one of the organizations which constituted the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe, produced between 1977 and 1979 retaliation, aggression and sabotage operations by South Africa and the Rhodesian regime, which caused great human and material losses to the country. Nevertheless, Mozambique held fast to its position and Samora Machel was the first head of an African state to make an official visit to Zimbabwe shortly after the latter country had gained its independence.

In March 1980, Samora Machel declared "war on the internal enemy", ordering a purge of the government apparatus, which he defined as "a key instrument of the Party's policy", to be carried out within three months. Special control and discipline offices were established for this purpose, and the public service sector was reorganized with orders to account for its operations.

Changes made in the area of commerce became more rapidly apparent. They began by self-criticism for a deviation which the President defined as "leftist" and which involved acceptance of a policy under which the state took over all retail businesses abandoned by the Portuguese, which move distorted and burdened the economic activities of the state. It is therefore planned to turn some of these businesses and shops into cooperatives and return the others to the private sector.

In view of the fact that the population of Maputo has almost doubled in the course of five years since independence and in view of the steps being taken in the commercial sector, "green zones" are being established in the vicinity not only of the capital, but other large cities as well, for the purpose of improving the supply of agricultural products to these urban centres.

The "war against the internal enemy" essentially means return of the public administration and the national economy to their normal course. It involves a re-definition of the role the state apparatus should play in the nation's economy and of the place the private sector should occupy in that economy. This will strengthen the leading role of FRELIMO as the sole guarantee of the continuation of the revolutionary process.

In April 1981, South African forces invaded Mozambique under the pretext of pursuing members of the African National Congress (ANC), the African revolutionary organization in the Republic of South Africa, and caused much death and destruction.

In March of the same year, the Mozambican authorities broke up a CIA network and expelled a number of agents of the American intelligence service, who operated as "diplomats" posted at the U.S. Embassy in Maputo. The activities of this group of spies included supply of information to BOSS, Pretoria's intelligence agency.

Economy: Agriculture and the mining industry are the mainstays of Mozambique's economy. Agriculture is pursued on 15,065,000 hectares of the total arable area of 52,873,000 hecatares by 90% of the economically active population which was estimated in 1977 at just over 4,000,000. They produced, mostly on state farms and in cooperatives sponsored by the state, 350,000 tons of maize, 8,000 tons of millet, 250,000 tons of sorghum, 2,000 tons of resin, 85,000 tons of copra, 60,000 tons of cotton seed and 30,000 tons of cotton fibre, 100,000 tons of peanuts, 3,000 tons of sesame, 10,000 tons of sunflower seed, 14,000 tons of tea, 23,000 tons of sisal, 4,000 tons of jute, 216,064 tons of sugar, 65,000 tons of bananas, 30,000 tons of mangos, 13,000 tons of pineapples, and 16,000 tons of grapefruit. In the livestock sector there are 2,200,000 head of cattle 900,000 goats, 270,000 pigs, and 240,000 sheep. Fishing—still not industrially organized—produces an annual catch of 13,000 tons. Mining is important mainly as regards the production of coal (384,000 tons in 1977). Industry, mostly light in character and nationalized since the exodus of its former Portuguese owners, turns out 65,040 tons of wheat flour, 3,360 tons of cotton thread and 3,480 tons of cotton fabrics, 23,040 tons of sulphuric acid, 258,000 tons of cement, and 1,752,000,000 kWh of electric power.

The balance of trade for 1975, the year of independence, showed a deficit of 106,510,000 dollars, due to imports amounting to 401,130,000 dollars and exports worth 294,620,000 dollars. In Maputo, the capital, the cost of living went up 72% in 1976, compared with the previous year. The national currency is the Mozambican escudo whose rate of exchange is 31.55 per U.S. dollar.

One of the foundations of the plan of economic reconstruction is the direct involvement of workers in production management through the institution of production councils.

Government: Mozambique is a republic with a presidential form of government. The President of the Republic is at the same time the chairman of the ruling party and in the case of his death or incapacitation his duties pass to the Central Committee of FRELIMO, which must appoint a new President within the shortest possible time. Under the 1975 Constitution, the supreme legislative body is the People's Assembly, the number of whose members must not exceed 210. The executive power is exercised by a Council of Ministers headed by the President of the Republic, which implements decisions regarding the domestic and foreign policy lines, adopted by the People's Assembly. The President of the Republic has the authority to appoint and change the members of the Council of Ministers. The political line to be followed by the government is set by FRELIMO.

For political and administrative purposes, the country is divided into ten provinces: Maputo, the capital, Manica, Sofala, Zambezia, Gaza, Inhambane, Tete, Nampula, Cabo Delgado, and Niassa. The provinces are subdivided into districts and townships.

Armed forces: On October 14, 1976, the government instituted a national service of people's security, whose task is to guard the achievements scored since the establishment of FRELIMO. This body operates in coordination with the armed forces and FRELIMO.

Organizations: FRELIMO is the only political party in Mozambique. It was formed in June 1962 by the merger of three groups—the National Democratic Union of Mozambique (UNDENAMO), the National Union of Mozambique, (UNAM), and the National Union of Independent Mozambique (UNAMI). It held its First Congress on September 25, 1962, which appointed its founder, Eduardo Mondlane, its chairman. The Second Congress was held in the liberated areas of Niassa Province on June 20,1968, and the Third Congress took place in Maputo on February 3, 1977. FRELIMO has a Central Committee of 67 members and a nine-member Political Bureau, both elected at the party's Third Congress. FRELIMO is a workers' and peasants' party and is guided by the principles of Marxism-Leninism. FRELIMO constituted itself as a political party in February 1977 on the basis of the political organizations and mass organizations of the people, which formed the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique. Its Chairman is Samora Machel.

The Organization of Mozambican Women (OMM) and the Organization of Mozambican Youth (OJM) were established after independence and were reconstructed after the 3rd congress of Production Councils. In 1978 FRELIMO undertook the task of building a national trade union organization.

The OMM held its first national conference in November 1976, at which it formulated and adopted its programme. It is a mass organization guided by FRELIMO.

The OJM held its constituent congresss from November 29 to December 3, 1977.

Education: The government abolished private schools and nationalized the education system in 1975. By 1977, the number of pupils attending primary schools had risen from 700,000 to 1,200,000, and was paralleled by a growing number of secondary-school students as well. 90% of the Mozambican population was illiterate at the time when the country became independent and therefore one of the first steps the new government took was the launching of a literacy campaign.

This campaign is being realized with the help of university students, who spend every July living and working with peasants. This also provides for an integral educational process which prevents the formation of elitist attitudes among intellectuals.

In the years following the proclamation of independence, literacy centres for adults were established throughout the country, staffed by volunteers—more than 9,000 workers and students—where about 40,000 adults attend classes in factories, villages and urban communities.

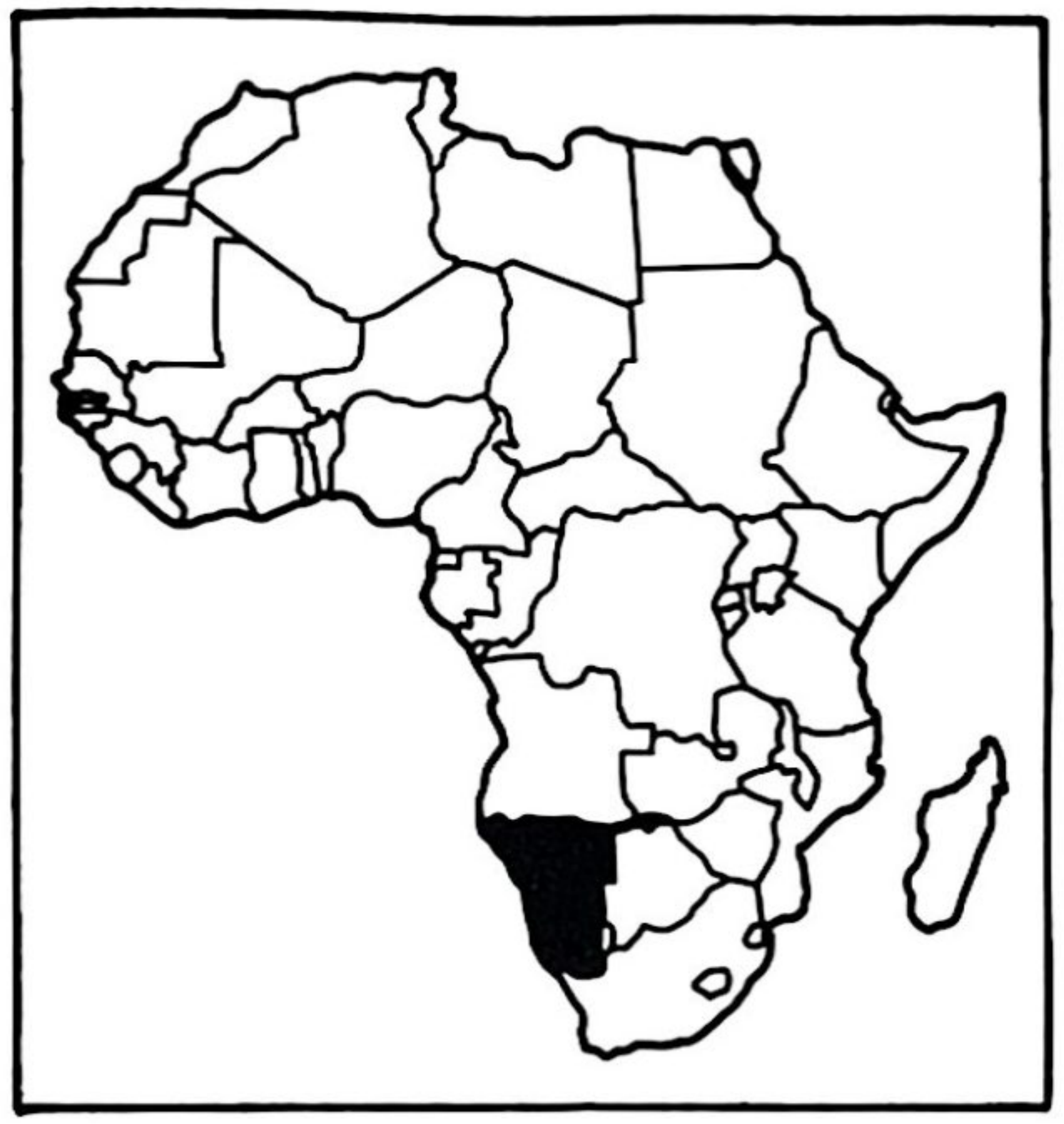
Public health: Medical care is free in Mozambique. The population is being instructed in the fundamentals of preventive care, while the government is carrying out a campaign for the elimination of infectious diseases. The measures being put into effect include supply of drinking water and a number of sanitary and hygiene measures among the population.

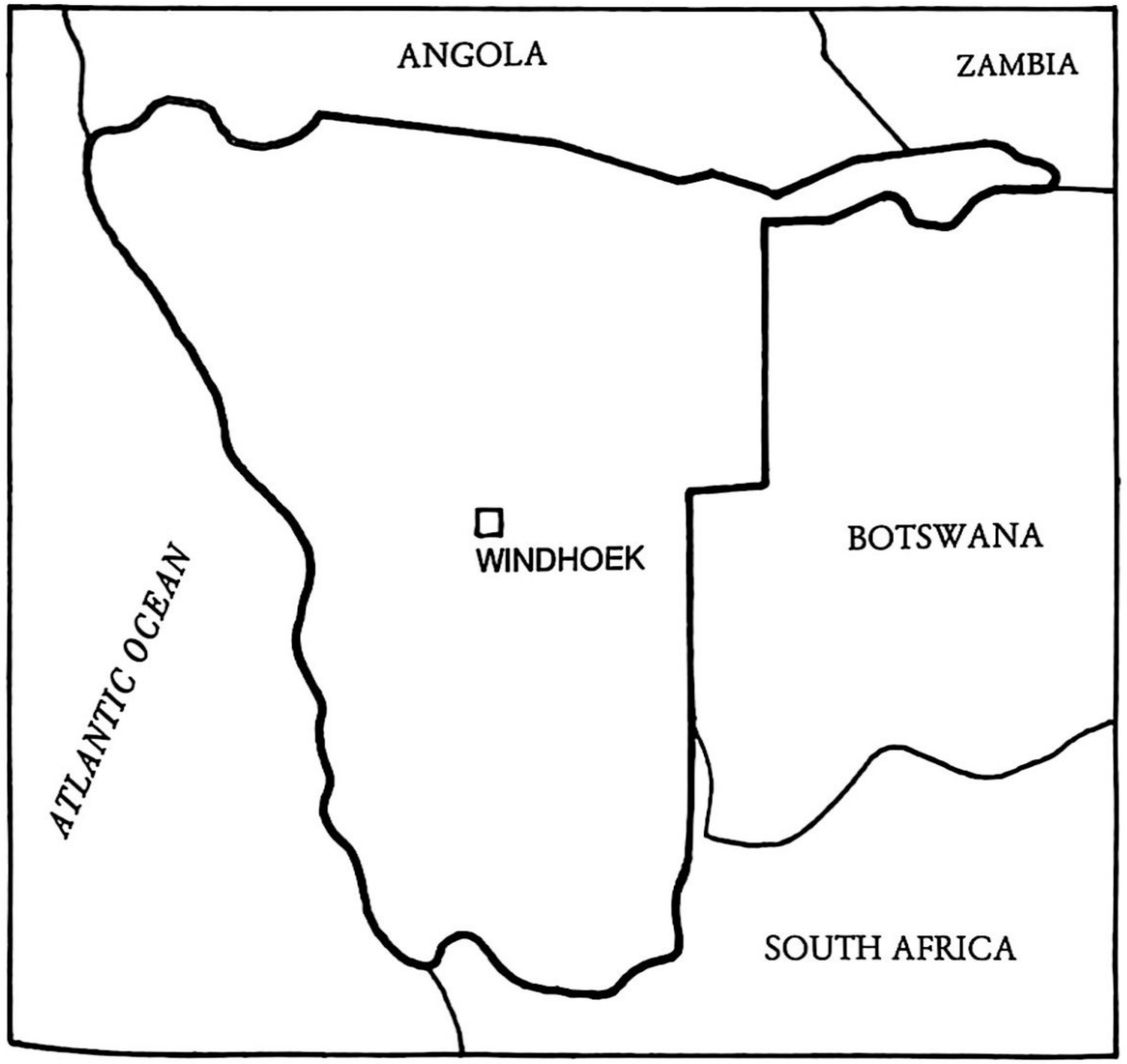
More than 3,600,000 Mozambicans were vaccinated against smallpox, and it was planned that in 1981 some 90 to 95% of the entire population would have been vaccinated against the major infectious diseases.

A shortage of qualified personnel gave rise to the training in intensive six-month courses of men and women in preventive medicine, who then work in villages.

Religion: The majority of the Mozambican population practice African animist cults. There are also more than 815,000 Moslems and more than 900,000 Christians, most of them Roman Catholics.

NAMIBIA





Official name: Namibia (South-West Africa).
Area: 824,292 sq.km.
Borders: In the south and south-east Namibia borders on the Republic of South Africa, in the east on Botswana, in the north on Angola, from which it is separated along the north-eastern section of the frontier by the narrow Caprivi Strip. In the north-east, the Zambezi River forms a natural frontier with Zambia.
Population: 953,000 (1978). The annual rate of population growth is 4.1%. The ethnic groups include the Ovambo, the Damara, the Herero, the Nama, the Kavango and other tribes (88% of the total population), and Europeans (12%).
Capital: Windhoek (76,000 inhabitants estimate).
Principal towns: Swakopmund, Luderitz and Walvis Bay.
Languages: Afrikaans is the official language spoken by the white minority. The Namibians speak African languages.
Geography: Namibia covers a large plain extending along the coast of the Atlantic Ocean in an arid region known as the Namib Desert. Its large sand dunes are characteristic features of Namibia's terrain. There are some high-lying areas rising over 2,000 m above sea level.

In the western part of Namibia lies the Kalahari Desert, which adds to the lack of cultivable land. The principal rivers are the Orange, which forms Namibia's southern frontier with South Africa, and the Cunene and the Zambezi in the north.

Brief history: Germany began colonizing South-West Africa (Namibia) in 1884, when the European powers were dividing the African continent among themselves. In the final years of the 19th century the European colonists appropriated tribal lands, especially in the south-central part of the country through wars of conquest waged against the Hereros (until 1904) and the Namas (until 1907). German brutality, manifest in the "extermination order" issued by General von Trotha, cost the lives of 65,000 Hereros. Only 15,000 of them survived to see their land and their cattle confiscated and their labour exploited by a small community of colonists settled on the best land available in the territory.

When World War I broke out, South African troops under the command of Generals Louis Botha and Jan Smuts invaded and occupied Namibia in 1914, defeating the Germans in the name of the "Allied cause".

After the war, the Allied powers discussed the future of the former German colonies and agreed that their administration should be left to the members of the League of Nations.

In the case of Namibia, Great Britain wanted the former German colony to be included in the neighbouring Union of South Africa, which was a member of the British Commonwealth. Instead, the League of Nations conferred the mandate over its territory to "His British Majesty, so that it should be administered as an integral part of the Union of South Africa". Namibian territory was placed under a mandate which enabled South Africa to administer it as its integral part. Under the mandate, South Africa could impose its own laws on the territory.

In 1933, the South African government pressed the League of Nations to permit its annexation of the Namibian territory, but its request was turned down by the League's Mandate Commission. After World War II and the formation of the United Nations Organization, the Namibian case became a permanent controversy between that international body and South Africa. The South African government refused to submit reports to the U.N. on its mandate over Namibia and thus the U.N established a Special Committee for Namibia, which since 1966 is the only body officially authorized to seek a solution of the problem.

The U.N. turned three times—in 1950, 1955 and 1956—to the International Court of Justice in The Hague with respect to the situation in Namibia. That tribunal re-affirmed that South Africa had no legal claim to maintain its control of the territory, but declared itself incompetent to change unilaterally the position of South-West Africa.

The U.N. General Assembly agreed in 1966 that South Africa should surrender its mandate over Namibia to a special commission set up by the world body. In 1968, the General Assembly adopted another resolution, sponsored by the Afro-Asian countries, which called on South Africa to withdraw from Namibia.

In 1964, an Investigating Commission for the Affairs of South-West Africa, appointed by the South African government and led by F. H. Odendaal, drew up a report on the future development of the non-white population of Namibia. The Odendaal Commission divided the Namibian population into twelve ethnic groups to which would be assigned autonomous reservations (Bantustans). This entailed the transfer of some African tribes to practically unproductive areas at the edge of the desert. South Africa imposed racial segregation on the territory of South-West Africa and instituted there its own system of government based on apartheid.

After the U.N. had adopted its 1966 resolution, the South African parliament enacted laws designed to implement the Odendaal Plan. The first law, enacted in 1968, was entitled "Development of self-government of the native nations" and established six "native nations"—the Ovambo, Damaralandia, Hererolandia, Namalandia, Kavango, and Capravi (eastern)—including the formation of legislative and executive councils outside the jurisdiction of the territorial government.

These councils were to legislate on some internal matters, but the President of South Africa retained the right to amend and abrogate such legislation, to impose new laws on the "native nations" and to change the government of any of them.

The second law was promulgated in 1969 under the name "South-West Africa Affairs". It altered the earlier relationship between Namibia and South Africa by transferring from the territorial government to that of South Africa legislative and administrative competence over twenty-five important categories of affairs, for example, the administration of justice.

The formation of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in 1960 came in response to the necessity of giving a single political expression to the anti-colonial struggle of the Namibian people and to define clearly their goals of independence and national identity.

The founders of SWAPO organized a political force able to resist attacks by reaction and especially the South Africans occupying Namibia, and instilled in the masses of people, the workers and peasants in particular, a revolutionary orientation that would help them launch the post-independence stage of development.

The next six years were devoted to the formation and mobilization of a broad popular front. When the People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN)—the armed branch of SWAPO—launched the armed struggle on August 26, 1966, the African people were ready and determined to fight for their liberation and opposed colonialism and racism with new strength.

In August 1966, at Ohurumbashe, in north-western Namibia, between the Ovambo and Kaovelo regions, SWAPO started the stage of insurrection against the racist forces. The PLAN guerillas, who had been trained in friendly African countries since 1961, succeeded in infiltrating that area and establishing there within a year a secret base.

That base was located far from sources of logistical support, which were limited because of the geopolitical conditions in the area, permitting infiltration only across the Caprivi

Strip from Zambia, then the sole free African country in southern Africa.

The resistance which the guerillas put up against the onslaught of the racist forces transported by helicopters was truly heroic. The SWAPO fighters brought down three helicopters in the course of the operations.

Two months later, the Namibian guerillas attacked the Ochikango outpost, then held by a group of racist policemen who fled to Ondongwa. Thus, that area was liberated within a few hours.

Both operations were followed by a re-inforcement of the South African occupation army and by brutal repression aimed at drowning in blood the emerging guerilla force.

The PLAN leadership later admitted that these initial operations have been tactical errors in spite of their sociological impact. The guerillas infiltrating deep inside Namibia, found themselves isolated and were gradually annihilated.

This explains the fact that PLAN military operations were few between 1966 and 1968. This was also the period when the whole movement was in the process of re-organization.

Guerilla operations resumed in 1969 in the form of sabotage, ambushes and the mining of communication lines frequently used by the racists. In response, the South African occupation army set up a chain of military supply bases, running from the main base at Grootfontein to Katima Mulilo.

This was the time when the occupation authorities made use of South African blacks for fighting the guerillas, since the Namibians refused to be militarily involved on the side of the Pretoria regime. The black South African mercenaries were designated as police and were trained especially for anti-guerilla operations.

The PLAN launched new offensives between 1969 and 1973. In the same period the racist regime warned the Zambian government not to assist the Namibian guerillas. The racists attacked Zambia, laid mines in the frontier areas, and assaulted SWAPO transit bases on Zambian territory, as well as camps of Namibian refugees.

This was a period of strengthening of the colonial and fascist forces, when collaboration grew between the Portuguese authorities in Angola and the South Africans occupying Namibia.

In 1972, the PLAN realized a qualitative change in the armed struggle for the liberation of Namibia, when it attacked the Kamenga base in the Caprivi Strip, using for the first time heavy weapons and artillery. To this day, the base is in ruins and remains unoperational.

Frustrated in their attempts to control the guerilla infiltration routes, the military occupation forces are using Namibians from the north as guides in order to detect and pursue the guerillas with the objective of cutting them off from their logistical supply bases.

The SWAPO mass organizations have a long tradition of active struggle against colonialism. In 1972 and 1973, Namibia was paralysed by a strike which shook the South African economy to the point where the occupation authorities were forced to change hurriedly the laws and regulations governing the inhuman system of contract labour, imposed by the racist legislation.

The strike was initiated by SWAPO militants inside the National Union of Namibian Workers—NUNW—and was supported by other sectors of the population. The strike was a heavy blow for the South African and other foreign economic interests, particularly in the mining industry.

However, the concessions made to the workers and basically concerned with wages and the brutal system of contract labour were only superficial.

The militant SWAPO youth (SWAPO Youth League), the women (SWAPO Women's Council), as well as student organizations, responded with vigour and determination to the appeals raised by the national liberation movement.

The people of Namibia steadily defy the strict laws, which prohibit, for example, the meeting of more than four persons. In spite of this ban, the SWAPO mass organizations hold public rallies and organize demonstrations in order to accustom the population to the mobilization of its forces and to increase its political consciousness.

At the end of April 1974, the northern front became active again, due to the infiltration of fresh forces and new weapons, not only through Zambia but also through Angolan territory under the control of the Movement for the Liberation of Angola—the MPLA.

Meanwhile, the political mobilization of the general population steadily progressed. Once inside the country, the guerillas infiltrated the labour force in the mines, on the plantations and in the fishing industry. Some were discovered and detained, but most of them succeeded in establishing links with those individuals and groups who had gone underground after 1966.

The overthrow of Portuguese fascism on April 25, 1974, marked the beginning of a widespread recruitment campaign by SWAPO. Many Namibians left their country through Angola, Zambia and Tanzania, and received military training in different parts of Africa. By the end of 1975, these already trained recruits re-entered Namibia.

SWAPO disclosed that among the thousands of patriots who had left the country to receive military training were agents of BOSS, the South African Secret Service, who were instructed to penetrate SWAPO in order to stir up differences and dissatisfaction within that organization with the objective of destroying it from within.

Most of the BOSS agents were eventually uncovered. In many cases they were former policemen, some of them specially trained in subversive operations. However, before they were identified, they had time to pursue their task of splitting up SWAPO and inciting dissatisfaction within its ranks.

Linked with such well-known reactionary elements at Andres Shipanga and Saloman Mifima, they formed an alliance supported by BOSS and the West German secret services. Planes loaded with clothing, food and other goods were flown in—not to help the guerillas and civilian population forced to flee Namibia from the brutal practices of the occupation troops, but for Shipanga and his followers.

These methods succeeded in corrupting a number of the SWAPO cadres, who rose up against their commanders and leaders. Pamphlets printed with the hlep of BOSS and the West German secret services were used in a propaganda struggle designed to alienate the people from the liberation struggle and to promote the policy aimed at undermining SWAPO ideologically.

This strategy had the obvious objective of destroying the PLAN from within, of curbing the armed struggle, of splitting up SWAPO, and of paving the ground for the return to Namibia of Shipanga and his acolytes for the purpose of particpating in the Turnhalle Conference under the auspices of the Republic of South Africa.

This plan was eventually discovered and its proponents were imprisoned. However, before that happened, they had time to disclose to the racists the location of a guerilla transit base in Zambia, where the occupation forces subsequently murdered 26 guerillas.

After the traitors inside SWAPO had been removed, the armed struggle scored great advances. The PLAN forces pentrated as deep as 150 km into Namibia up to Grootfontein. In that farming area populated by white colonists, the guerilla operations forced many of the farmers to flee to the towns and to abandon their property to the racist forces stationed in the area.

The situation became extremely serious in June 1977. The then South African Prime Minister, Balthazar Johanes Vorster, had to visit Namibia in order to assure personally the white colonists of his support and to plead with them not to leave the country.

In the military sphere, the racists launched an operation code-named "Cobra".

At the beginning of June, an Israeli battalion arrived to help the dispirited racist troops. the objective of the operation was to drive out the guerillas from the white area and to cut their infiltration routes by establishing a military security zone along Namibia's frontiers with the progressive African states.

Thousands of African peasants and other inhabitants were detained and herded into concentration camps, where they were tortured. Their property was looted and their villages were destroyed and levelled to the ground with bulldozers. Hundreds of prisoners were murdered and a scorched-earth policy was put into practice.

Nevertheless, many peasants escaped, and later returned to their native places and rebuilt their homes.

The guerillas, forced to retreat to the south in order to avoid the "Cobra" operation, could rely on the help of the Namibian population, who provided them with shelter and food.

"Cobra" turned into yet another failure by the South African forces, making them engage in a forcible recruitment of Namibians for military training. First, they tried to do so among the Rehoboth mixed-bloods, who were organized in a so-called Coloured Corps. Most of them are World War II veterans who had fought in the ranks of the Allied forces in Ethiopia.

Then this policy was tried among the Okavango and the Ovambo, but recruits from these tribal groups were not found reliable and the South African military authorities dispersed them as guides serving with racist units. Most of them are, in fact, peasants who had been detained in the course of operation "Cobra" and who had to choose between remaining in the concentration camps and "volunteering" for this service.

Operating jointly with them are Angolan counter-revolutionaries from UNITA, who are being paid to carry out sabotage and terror against the defenceless population, posing as SWAPO fighters. The object was to split the population from the Nambian guerillas and to stop the massive assistance provided to the national liberation movement.

However, the people were not deceived and continued aiding the SWAPO guerillas who penetrated ever deeper inside the country and succeeded in carrying out sabotage operations even in the capital of Windhoek.

In its fight against SWAPO, South Africa is also making use of mercenaries coming from Europe and the United States, most of the veterans from the war in Indochina and who had survived the colonial wars in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique.

In 1977 South Africa annexed Walvis Bay and made it a part of its Cape Province. This important Namibian port is the only deep-water harbour between Lobito in Angola and South Africa's Capetown. It dominates the commercial sea lanes around the Cape of Good Hope and because of its location it also provides easy access to the American continent.

90% of Namibia's trade and all of its mineral exports pass through Walvis Bay, which is also the centre of the country's second major economic sector, fishing. The annexation of Walvis Bay by South Africa was ignored in the proposals raised by five Western powers at the meeting on Namibia, held in New York from February 9 to 13, 1978.

These negotiations, held between representatives of SWAPO and South Africa, and attended by Great Britain, the United States, West Germany and Canada, ended in a deadlock when the South African Foreign Minister, Roelof Botha, walked out. On April 17, 1978, he re-asserted his government's refusal to withdraw from Namibia.

SWAPO holds that such talks should be based on the return of Walvis Bay to Namibia, the complete and unconditional withdrawal of the South African occupation troops, and on democratic elections under the supervision of the United Nations.

The U.N. General Assembly held its Ninth Special Session on Namibia from April 24 to May 3, 1978, and approved a declaration and programme of action, with several advanced Western countries abstaining. These documents called for and supported Namibia's right to self-determination and independence, and the definite transfer of the territory's administration to the U.N. Special Commission for Namibia.

On its part, South Africa surprisingly announced its acceptance of the five-power plan of February, 1978, at an international conference on Namibia with the objective of preventing the adoption of resolutions condemning its regime.

On May 4, 1978, only twenty-four hours after the U.N. General Assembly had ended its ninth special session on Namibia, South Africa attacked a Namibian refugee camp at Cassinga in Angola, where almost 700 people lost their lives. In response to this attack, SWAPO immediately withdrew from the negotiations.

Two months later, in Luanda, SWAPO agreed to meet with representatives of the United States, Great Britain, West Germany, France and Canada to resume the talks on a declaration of Namibian independence.

Sam Nujoma, the chairman of SWAPO, stressed that the plan for Namibia, drawn up by the five Western powers, differed from the position held by his movement in that it ignored the legal status of Walvis Bay and, moreover, retained its vague provisions regarding the control of the South African occupation troops during the period of transition. Another contested point was the narrow scope of control given to the U.N. representation in Namibia in the period of transition with respect to the South African occupation authorities. Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, SWAPO agreed to sign an agreement with the five Western powers, accepting their proposal as a working paper.

SWAPO expected that the U.N. Security Council would further debate the issue prior to adopting a decision. The supreme international body passed on September 29, 1978, a resolution based on a report by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, which envisaged its partial acceptance by SWAPO. In fact, SWAPO did accept the document with some reservations, since it left some aspects of the problem rather vague.

From December 4 to 8, 1978, South Africa unilaterally held elections in Namibia in defiance of the U.N. resolutions, which stipulated that such elections should be held under U.N. supervision. As had been generally expected, these unilateral elections were won by the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, formed by the Pretoria regime in 1977 and made up of various tribal chiefs who had signed an electoral pact with the all-white Republican Party, which is an outcrop of the National Party of South West Africa.

On May 4, 1979, began the International Year of Solidarity With the People of Namibia and the South West Africa People's Organization, sponsored by the United Nations. The date was chosen in memory of the attack by South African troops on the Namibian refugee camp at Cassinga in Angola.

The government which emerged from the so-called "internal accord" in Rhodesia in May 1979 under the leadership of Abel Muzorewa seemed to encourage the Pretoria regime to seek a similar solution for Namibia. Thus, throughout 1979, the South African racists tried to combine their various efforts in this direction.

On the one hand, they continued to prolong their talks with the representatives of the five Western powers and to submit unacceptable conditions to the U.N. Special Committee on Namibia and through it to SWAPO, while, on the other hand, they tried to win more African tribal support for the government of the colonist Dirk Mudge, set up by them in Windhoek in December 1978. The break-up of the talks held in Geneva in November

1979, where the "Contact Group"—i.e., the five Western powers—tried to create artificial differences between SWAPO and the Angolan government, came as no surprise.

However, the events in Zimbabwe between January and April 1980, when the Muzorewa regime fell and Robert Mugabe's ZANU won the independence elections, greatly favoured SWAPO in the regional context by strengthening its negotiating hand. At its special session held in Algeria in June 1980, the U.N. Committee for Namibia adopted a document known as the "Declaration of Algiers", which condemns the delaying tactics employed by South Africa and the plunder of Namibia's natural resources by the multinational corporations. The session also approved various measures for the application of "Decree No. 1", which is designed to protect Namibia's natural resources and which defines as illegal all transactions concluded between the Pretoria government and the multinationals.

In the military sphere, the PLAN fighters cut on two occasions in April 1980 the high-voltage lines feeding electric power to the north of Namibia, to the capital and to the major mining centres, and similarly attacked telephone and rail communications, as well as estates of white colonists. At the beginning of May, they staged a daring operation against the military airfield at Ondangwa, in the Ovambo region, where they destroyed two helicopters and an Impala jet fighter. The South African retaliation was not long in coming—two invasions of the Angolan frontier on May 12 and 21, cost the lives of 260 people.

From July 17 to 19, 1980, the Central Committee of SWAPO held its first special session in the Angolan community of Ndalantando, and adopted the following decisions:

(a) to condemn the South African aggression against Zambia and Angola, in particular the recent invasion of the Angolan provinces of Cunene and Cuando-Cubango;

(b) to denounce the imperialist powers, in particular the United States, Great Britain, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Japan, and their allies, as well as the multinational corporations, for their political, diplomatic and military support of the Pretoria regime;

(c) to condemn the persistent refusal by South Africa to implement U.N. Security Council Resolution 435 of 1978 and its insistent support of the so-called Ministerial Council in Windhoek in preparation for a unilateral proclamation of independence by the white colonists and their puppets in Namibia;

(d) to condemn the sinister plans of the five Western powers aimed at destabilizing and discrediting SWAPO in the eyes of the world;

(e) to expel from SWAPO Mishake Albert Muyongo (its Vice-Chairman), Lemmy Matengu and Jackson Mazazi (members of the Central Committee), and six other leaders, for their activities against the territorial integrity of Namibia, the unity of the organization and the progress of the national liberation struggle.

At the end of 1980, the South African government seemed to have reached agreement with the U.N. Secretary-General to attend a conference held in Geneva from January 7 to 14, 1981, with the objective of putting into practice the provisions of Resolution 435. In order to make Pretoria participate in that event, SWAPO approved the Waldheim plan with some reservations, i.e., the formation of a a demilitarized zone 50 km deep on either side of the Namibian frontiers with Angola and Zambia immediately after the signing of a cease-fire agreement; maintenance of a certain number of military bases by both opposing sides (seven in total) under the control of a contingent of U.N. "Blue Berets" concentrated mainly in the frontier areas; the progressive withdrawal of South African troops from Namibian territory, so that only 1,500 men are left in the country at election time; release of political prisoners and return of the exiles; election of a constituent assembly, and

some additional, minor, points. SWAPO would accept the presence of Dirk Mudge's group in the South African delegation, while Pretoria would finally accept SWAPO as a representative body.

Nevertheless, the Geneva conference failed, mainly due to the ambivalent and obstructionist position of South Africa, the "independent" posing by Mudge and his minions, the contradictory position of the five Western powers, and, above all, the inadmissible economic, political and military demands.

When he learned of the failure of this latest U.N. attempt to solve the Namibian problem, Sam Nujoma declared that South Africa understood only the language of arms and that his organization saw the necessity of stepping up the revolutionary struggle for the final and total independence of Namibia.

In February 1981, the Foreign Ministers of the non-aligned countries, meeting in New Delhi, and in particular the Foreign Ministers of the countries of Southern Africa, declared their unqualified support of the latest decisions adopted by the national liberation vanguard of the Namibian people.

According to Nujoma, in spite of manoeuvres by imperialism and the racists, the Geneva conference for the first time gave recognition to Namibia as a nation—and this was a great victory. He said that South Africa attended that session because it was forced to do so by the growing armed struggle of the Namibian people, but once there, it tried to assert that its puppets in Namibia were representative of the people of that country. SWAPO would not negotiate with them because it recognizes only the two forces facing each other on the battlefront—the South African troops and the fighters of the Namibian people.

SWAPO continues its consistent struggle for true independence. It points out that a realistic foundation for constructive negotiations is provided by U.N. Security Council Resolution No. 435, and rejects the manoeuvres of the "contact group" of the Western powers and, in particular, the speculations of the South African racists based on "free" elections supervised by Western military contingents. SWAPO asserts that U.S., British, French, Canadian and West German soldiers—who should ensure the "fairness" of the elections under the Western plan—would be used under the guise of "democratism" to help the racists and their quisling Turnhalle Democraatic Alliance participate in Nambia's government. The brave struggle waged by the Namibian patriots, led by members ot the South West African People's Organization, relies on the broad support of progressive forces throughout the world.

Economy: According to official U.S. sources, Namibia's gross national product in 1979 was approximately worth 1,400,000,000 dollars, while the World Bank reported in 1978 that its value in that year was 1,030,000,000 dollars. Only 30% of Namibia's total area is being farmed, but 60% of the total labour force is employed in agriculture and only 4% in industry.

The principal agricultural products are maize, millet, sorghum and wheat. The fishing industry, which is a major economic sector, produced 401,000 tons of fish in 1977. In the same year Namibia had close to 3,000,000 head of cattle, 5,000,000 sheep and 2,000,000 goats.

Namibia's highly strategic mining industry is 90% controlled by two large conglomerates —the Consolidated Diamond Mines of South West Africa, dominated by British, United States and South African capital, and the U.S.-owned Tsumeb group—and produces diamonds (Namibia is the world's main producer of industrial diamonds), copper, lead, zinc, vanadium, tin, cadmium, silver and other minerals. Large-scale production of uranium began in 1978 in the Rossing mine. The principal customers for Namibia's mineral wealth are the United States, West Germany, South Africa, Great Britain and Japan.

Namibia's exports in 1979 were worth 530,000,000 dollars and imports 265,000,000 dollars. The national currency is the South African rand.

Armed forces: The People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) is the military organization of SWAPO.

Government: The South West Africa People's Organization is recognized by the United Nations as the sole and legitimate representative of the Namibian people in their struggle for self-determination, national independence and a united Namibia.

Fathih Bouayad Agha is the acting president of the U.N. Committee for Namibia and is entrusted with the conduct of all negotiations on the transfer of authority over Namibia to the United Nations for the purpose of subsequently granting it self-determination.

South Africa, which illegally occupies Namibia, appointed an administrator for that country.

Organizations: The South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) is led by a Central Committeee whose president is Sam Nujoma. At its session held on January 4 to 7, 1979, the Central Committee re-affirmed SWAPO's dedication to "create in Namibia a classless and just society without exploitation and racism, which would ensure the institution of social rights and national control of the nation's resources".

Education: The educational system instituted by the South Africans in Namibia is a copy of their own system and is governed by legislation based on apartheid, which denies the native population proper education and social progress.

The system of apartheid permeates all spheres of life in Namibia and physically segregates white and non-white students under the concept of keeping each ethnic group separated from the others.

The Education Ordinance No. 27, issued in 1962, governs education for the white population, which is administered by the Depatment of Territorial Education. Education for Africans is governed by the 1953 Bantu Education Act No. 47 and is administered by the South African Department of Bantu Administration and Development. Education for people of mixed blood is governed by the South West Africa Education Act No. 63 of 1972, the Baster of Rehoboth Education Act No. 85 of 1972, and the Nama in South West Africa Education Act No. 86 of 1972, all of which are being implemented by the Department of Coloured, Rehoboth and Nama Relations of South Africa.

The system of education for whites has twelve forms, while that for blacks has thirteen forms, which means that in order to obtain a certificate of basic education Africans must study for three years and whites only for two.

White children can study in Afrikaans, English and German, while blacks are instructed only in Afrikaans, which is considered as their mother tongue. This obstructs their access to secondary schools where examinations are conducted in English and German.

Although whites represent only 20% of the total student body, 80% of the total expenditures on education are spent on the white schools.

There are three different types of schools for the Africans: community schools, which are run by a tribe or an African council or community, Bantu government schools, established by the South Africans, and state-supported private or missionary schools. The South African government illegally occupying Namibia favours the first two types.

Since 1976, African students have been boycotting classes and examinations in protest against the discriminatory educational system. The Namibian Black Students Organization announced in January 1977 that the boycott would continue as long as the system of racial separation in education persisted.

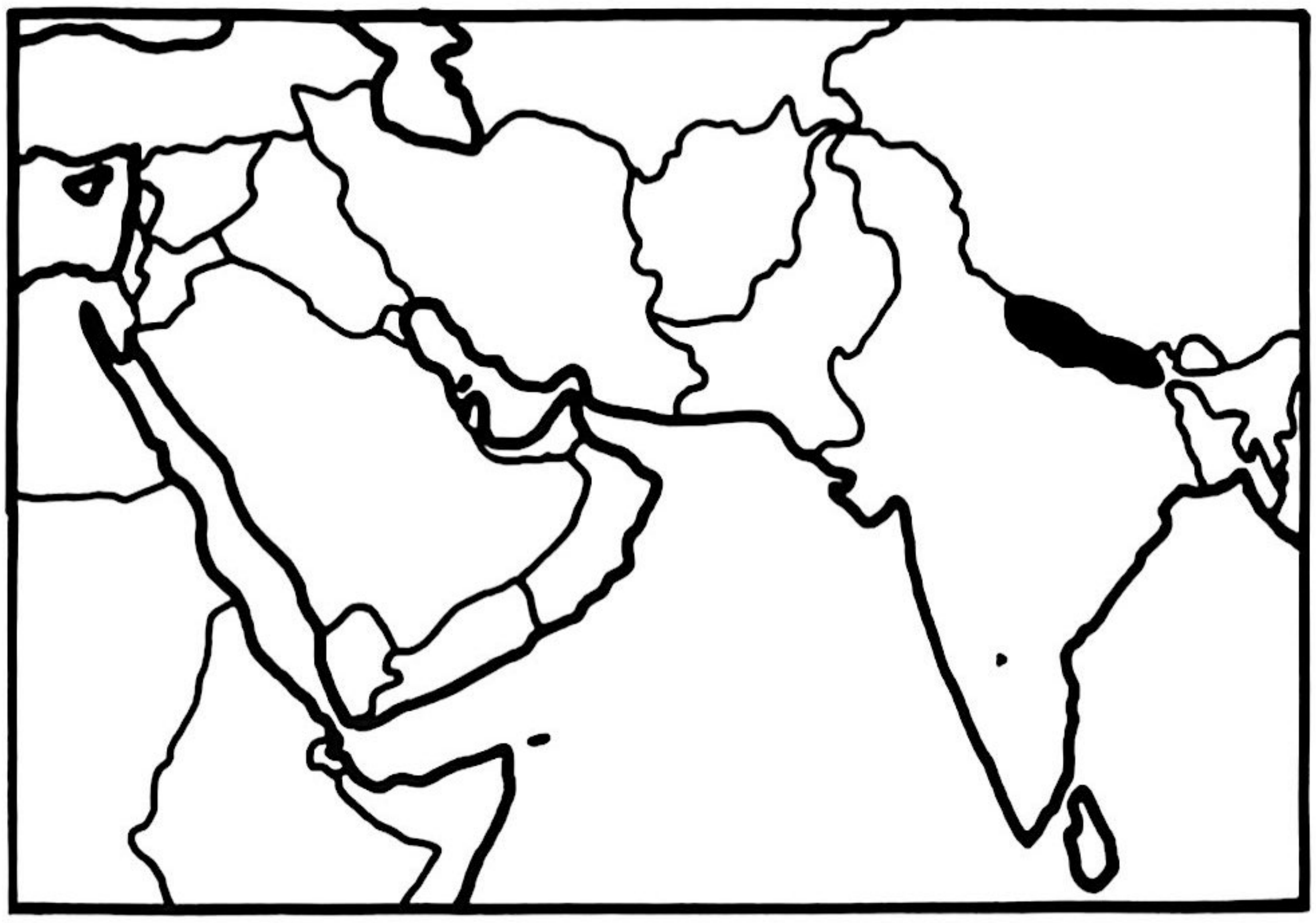
The educational system lays stress on training the native population for manual jobs and handicrafts at the expense of academic subjects, and on teaching the Afrikaans language, which impedes the black population's capacity to speak English and German.

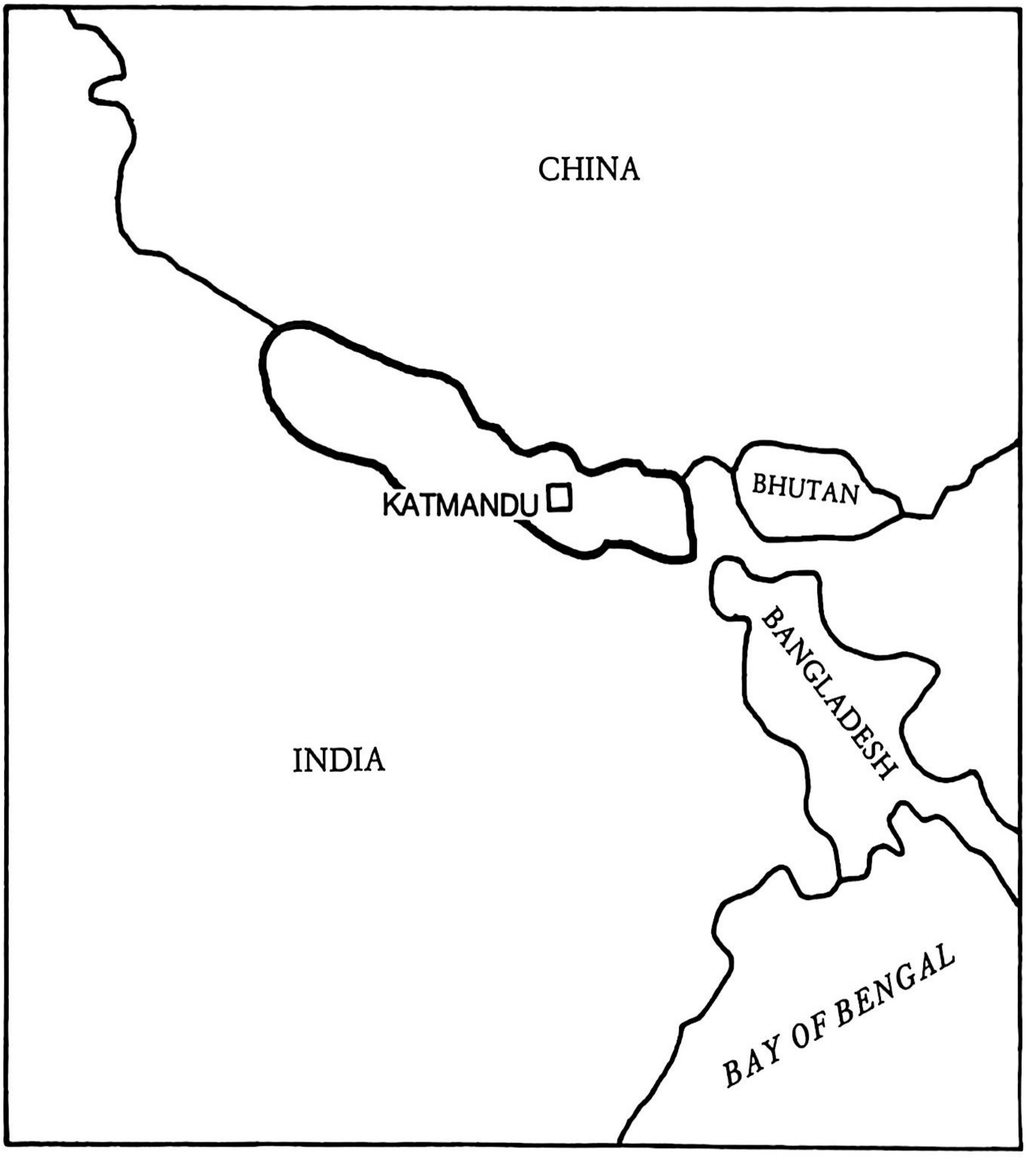
Public health: Medical services and facilities are concentrated in the large towns with a white population. The Africans live in segregated areas suffering from scarcity of water and large-scale soil erosion, where they are exposed to contamination. The African population greatly suffers from such contagious diseases as tripanosomiasis, trachoma and tuberculosis, which are related to such socio-economic factors as overcrowded living quarters, lack of water and proper sanitation habits, malnutrition, and inadequate public sanitation facilities.

In 1974, there were 3,441 hospital beds available in the Bantustans and tribal reserves, 22 mission hospitals, and 55 private clinics and hospitals.

Religion: There is no official religion, but the majority of the Europeans are Protestants and are strongly influenced by the Dutch Reformed Church, which advocates the most rigid segregation of Africans. The majority of the native population practise animist cults.

NEPAL




CHINA
KATMANDU
BHUTAN
BANGLADESH
INDIA
BAY OF BENGAL

Official name: The Kingdom of Nepal.
Area: 140,797 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Nepal borders on the People's Republic of China, in the east, west and south on India.
Population: 13,712,517 inhabitants in 1979. The annual rate of population growth is 2.4%.
Capital: Kathmandu (180,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Patan, Bhagadaon and Biratnagar.
Languages: Nepali is the official language. Also spoken are Tibetan and Newar.
Public holiday: December 28, King Birendra's Birthday (1945).
Geography: Nepal is a landlocked country situated at the foot of the Himalayas. It has three distinct geographical regions: a plain known as the Terai, a central range, and a range of high peaks of the Himalayas. It is in Nepal where we find the world's highest peaks: Mt. Everest (8,848 m), Makaku (8,481 m), Cho Oyo (8,153 m), Dhaulagiri (8,171 m), Manaslu (8,156 m), and Annapurna (8,078). The principal rivers, which empty into the Bay of Bengal through the Ganges, are the Bheri, the Rapti, the Kali Gandak, the Seti, the Karnati, the Gandak, the Sun Kosi, the Arun and the Tamur.

The differences in elevation produce a great variety of climatic types which permit both cattle raising and the cultivation of crops common to temperate zones (cereals) as well as crops of tropical character (sugar cane, tobacco). The lower hills and the valleys are covered with dense jungle, which is the habitat of wild animals. There is rare timber as well as minerals. The Valley of Kathmandu is one of the most densely populated and fertile valleys and the heart of the country, as well as the site of Nepal's capital.

The median annual temperature is 11°C and the hottest month of the year is July, when the average temperature is about 20°C. The driest month is December, with an average rainfall of 3 mm, while July is the most humid, with an average precipitation of 373 mm.

Brief history: A major role in the formation of the Nepali nation has been played by neighbouring peoples—the Tibetans and the Indians of Hindustan. In the 12th century the Gurkhas—an Indian caste of warriors from Rajputana—made their appearance on the scene. The primitive inhabitants of the area adjoining Tibet, split into a number of clans and patriarchal domains, gradually assimilated with them.

The Gurkhas founded a dynasty which has survived to this day, and in 1769 established their political power in the country. In 1792, the British colonialist East India Company forced a commercial treaty on Nepal, which permitted company officials, after a number of conflicts, to lodge themselves firmly in the capital.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Prime Minister Bhim Sen spurred progress in the country when he succeeded in consolidating the state by eliminating the dispersion which had been characteristic of the feudal regime. Obviously, this ran counter to British plans and thus in 1814 Britain declared war on Nepal. The technical superiority of the British prevailed over the resistance put up by the Nepalis and they were forced to accept the Treaty of Segauli, whereby they lost a large part of their territory. A British governor was installed in Kathmandu to control Nepal's foreign policy, and Nepal was prohibited from maintaining direct relations with other countries.

In the middle of the 19th century, the Rana military caste seized power after a coup which claimed many victims. The British favoured this feudal family, which ran the country in keeping with the British interests—exploiting its natural wealth without making any investments that would help overcome the nation's backwardness. The Rana family held power in Nepal for a century, having established a hereditary succession in running the government through a monarchy of Prime Ministers tied to foreign capital.

The Ranas were officially Prime Ministers of the Kings of Nepal, but the king had in fact become a prisoner of the actual leaders, who held absolute power in the country.

In keeping with the wishes of the British colonialists, the Ranas kept Nepal isolated from the rest of the world, and this isolation, helped by the country's geographical position, preserved for a long time the vestiges of the Middle Ages in the Himalayan kingdom. On the domestic scene, corruption and enrichment of the privileged groups were most characteristic, just as the torture and killing of those who dared oppose them.

In 1947 the rulers of Nepal signed a treaty with Britain, under which the latter country could recruit as many as eight Nepalese battalions, including Gurkha volunteers. At present, there are 7,000 Nepalese serving in the British Army, stationed in Britain, Hong Kong and Brunei.

The tyranny disintegrated under the impact of a large-scale insurgent movement. In 1951, with the support of the popular masses, King Tribhubana defeated the Ranas and the then Prime Minister was forced to resign. A constitutional monarchy was proclaimed, power in the country was restored to the king, and on February 18, a progressive government was installed.

When Tribhubana died on March 13, 1955, he was succeeded on the throne by his son, Mahendra Bir Bikram Shah, who adopted a policy of opening the country to the outside world. In the same year, Nepal was admitted to the United Nations. The government began to take steps aimed at modernizing the country and eliminating the feudal vestiges, although the country's land and wealth continued to be held by the bourgeoisie and the Rana family.

Prior to 1960, Nepal had some frontier problems with China, but these were eventually settled when the two countries signed a treaty of peace and friendship.

The growing internal political struggle between pro-Chinese and pro-Indian factions made King Mahendra ban all political parties in 1961 and institute a system known as Panchayat. The king explained his radical move by asserting that a Western-style multiparty system was not suitable for Nepal because of the backwardness, isolation and illiteracy of its population.

A new constitution was proclaimed in 1962. Another important step was taken in 1963 with the prohibition of polygamy and marriages between minors, as well as the abolition of all vestiges of the caste system, which had still existed.

King Mahendra died on January 21, 1972. He is credited with having brought Nepal into the 20th century, with having established relations with more than 50 countries (in 1956 Nepal had relations with only five countries), and with having pursued a policy of positive neutrality, non-alignment and struggle against colonialism.

On February 24, 1975, Mahendra's son, Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Deva, was officially crowned as King of Nepal. Just as his father, he has pursued a policy of open doors to the outside world and of promotion of national development with foreign aid.

In 1977 an old treaty of commerce and transit with India was replaced by two treaties that permit Nepal to engage in commerce with other countries.

Opposition to absolute monarchy among some political segments in the country, which became evident during violent student demonstrations in April and May 1979, led to the closing of the university in Kathmandu, the institution of press censorship, and detention of the main opposition leaders. Moreover, King Birendra called a popular referendum to determine whether people wanted to preserve the system he had established, or whether they wanted a restoration of the system of political parties.

The referendum, held in May 1980, confirmed the Panchayat system with 55% of the votes cast (4.8 million of the 7.2 million eligible voters went to the polls). The remaining

45% favoured a multi-party system.

After the referendum the king promulgated a law banning all organizational activities relating to political parties, as well as all publications with political content. At the same time the law changed the system of electing the National Panchayat, i.e., the national parliament, whose members were now to be elected directly by popular vote for a term of five years. The Prime Minister and the cabinet were to be elected by the National Panchayat and were accountable to it.

In September 1980, the present Prime Minister, Surya Bahadur Thapa, declared that "Nepal's foreign policy is unchanged" and added that his government was "a firm adherent of non-alignment". "Our objective," he said, "is the struggle for peace, against war, against colonialism and racism, for friendship and mutual understanding among all the peoples of this planet."

Nepal is a founding member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and has participated in all its summit sessions.

In 1980 King Birendra was engaged in very intensive international activities, having visited a number of countries in Asia and Europe.

Economy: Agriculture is the mainstay of Nepal's economy, providing the means of livelihood to more than 90% of the economically active population, which was estimated to number 473,000 in 1978. The same year, 23,769 sq.km of land were under cultivation, but in 1979 only 10% of irrigable land was in fact being irrigated.

Under Nepal's Fifth Five-Year Development Plan, new pharmaceutical, textile, farm-implement, wood-working and wood-pulp factories were built in the country. Jute, timber and tourism are the main sources of foreign exchange.

In 1979 the balance of trade deficit had grown by almost 20%, due to a rise in the volume of imports. Nepal's principal commercial partner is India, which accounts for more than 75% of its foreign trade. Practically all goods imported by Nepal pass through the port of Calcutta. Nepal has also established trade relations with China, the People's Democratic Republic of Korea, Bangladesh and Egypt.

Nepal's Sixth Five-Year Plan (1981-1985) envisages total investments of 20,500,000,000 Nepalese rupees, which is almost 80% more than under the previous plan. Half of that sum is to come from foreign aid, which is being provided mostly by India, Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany and China.

In the 1978-1979 period, Nepal's agriculture produced 2,339,000 tons of rice, 743,000 tons of maize, 454,000 tons of wheat, 379,000 tons of sugar cane, 5,000 tons of tobacco, 66,000 tons of jute, and 268,000 tons of potatoes.

In the same period, Nepalese industry turned out 12,152 tons of jute, 24,727 tons of sugar, 38,038 tons of cement, 6,040 hectolitres of beer, 1,149,000,000 cigarettes, 43,631 pairs of shoes, 3,889,000 m. of cotton fabrics, and 1,717,000 m. of synthetic fabrics.

In 1977 Nepal's per capita gross national product was 110 dollars. The national currency is the Nepalese rupee. The 1978 national budget, which was balanced, amounted to 3,087,400,000 Nepalese rupees. In the same year Nepal received 2,088,900,000 Nepalese rupees in foreign aid, while its trade balance showed a deficit of 1,686,000,000 Nepalese rupees, due to the fact that its imports cost 2,883,200,000 rupees but exports did not exceed 1,197,200,000 rupees. In 1977 Nepal's foreign exchange reserves amounted to the equivalent of 1,775,800,000 Nepalese rupees.

Government: Nepal is a constitutional monarchy. The supreme legislative body is the National Panchayat (Parliament), whose members are elected by popular vote under a 1980 constitutional amendment. The executive power is vested in the king, who governs with the help of a Prime Minister and a Cabinet, both elected by the National Panchayat.

Armed forces: Nepal has an army of 20,000 men, according to 1979 data. The military budget in the fiscal year 1977-1978 was 173,000,000 Nepalese rupees.

Organizations: Political parties have been banned in Nepal since 1960. A popular referendum that approved this royal decision was held in May 1980.

Education: Free primary education of five years was instituted in 1975. In the school year 1976-1977, primary schools were attended by 777,000 pupils, while the number of secondary-school students was 337,000. There is a university, founded in 1960. In 1979, more than 80% of the population were illiterate and 98% of the women could not even sign their name.

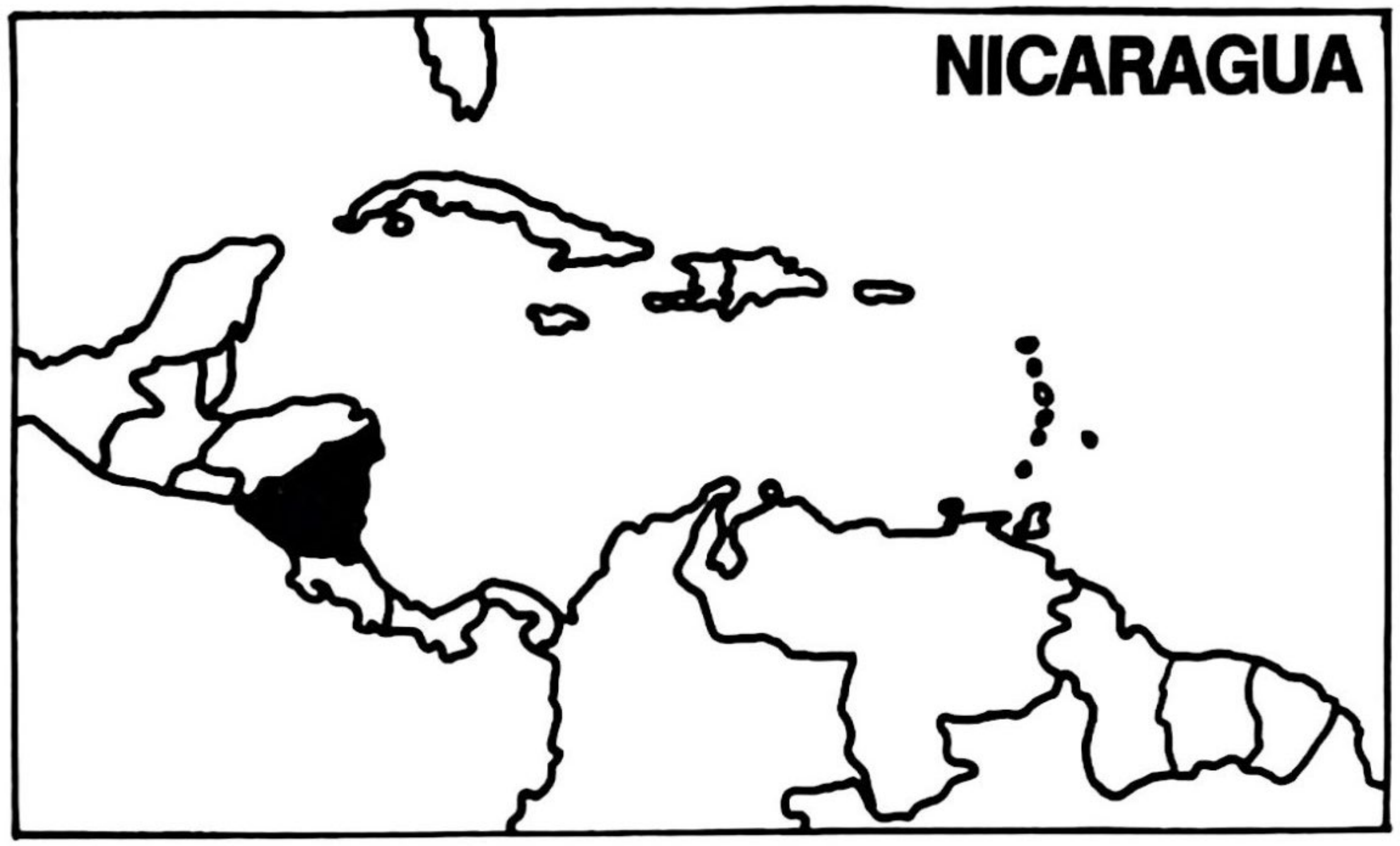
Until 1939 no women were admitted to the schools. The first school for girls was built at the end of World War II, but it only provided instruction in handicrafts.

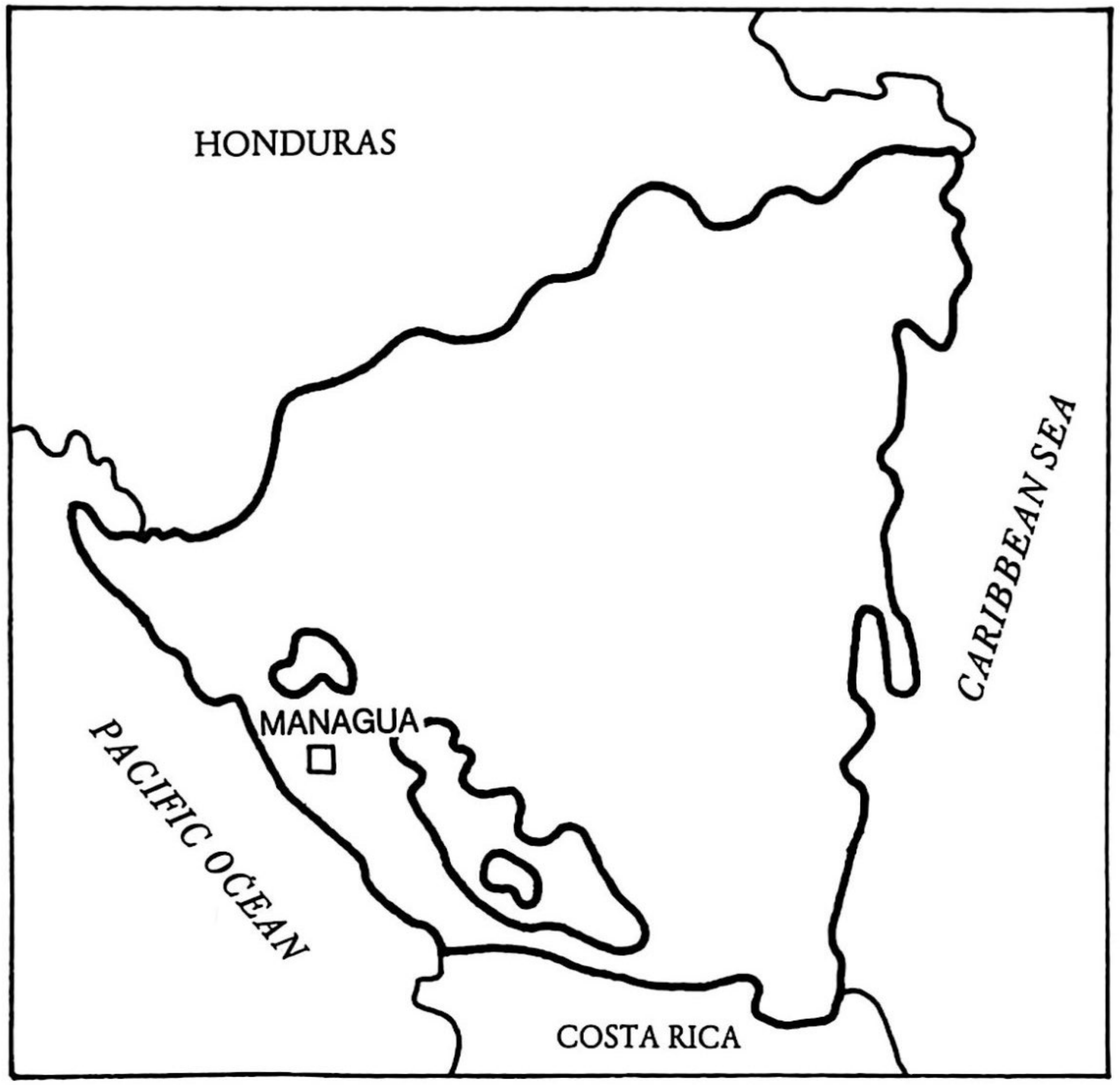
Today, girls constitute almost half of all pupils in the first forms of primary schools. Thus far school attendance is not compulsory, because of a shortage of school facilities and teachers.

Public health: In 1975 Nepal had 1,881 hospital beds (one for every 6,600 inhabitants) and there was one doctor for every 33,000 inhabitants.

Religion: More than half of Nepal's population practise Hinduism, which is the religion of the royal family and thus also the official religion. About one million Nepalese profess Buddhism and there is also a small Moslem minority.

NICARAGUA




HONDURAS
CARIBBEAN SEA
MANAGUA
PACIFIC OCEAN
COSTA RICA

Official name: The Republic of Nicaragua.
Area: 133,000 sq.km (including 9,306 sq.km of lakes).
Borders: Nicaragua is the largest of the countries of Central America. In the north it borders on Honduras (887 km), in the east it has its 551 km-long Caribbean coast, in the south it has 268 km of a common frontier with Costa Rica, and in the west its Pacific coast is 410 km long. Two islands in the Caribbean Sea—Maiz Grande and Maiz Pequena—also belong to Nicaragua.
Population: 2,500,000 inhabitants in 1978. The average annual rate of population growth was 3.1% in the period 1970-1978.
Capital: Managua.
Principal towns: Leon, Granada, Masaya, Chinandega, Matagalpa and Esteli.
Languages: Spanish is the official language.
Public holidays: September 15, Independence Day (1821), and July 19, Victory of the Revolution (1979).
Geography: The Central American range which passes through the country from the north-west to the south-east, forms in the north a craggy plateau, in the central part of the country the Sierra de Amerrisque or the Cordillera Chontalena, and near the Caribbean coast a number of outcroppings—the Isabelia, Segoviana and Darien ranges, the Huapi Mountains, the Yolaina range. The highest elevations in the Dipilto and Jalapa range on the frontier with Honduras are the Mogoton (2,107 m) and the Volcan Viejo (1,869 m). The Isabelia range in the north runs towards the east and its highest point is Penas Blancas (1,745 m). The Darien range extends from the west to the east and its highest elevation is Mt. Chimborazo (1,688 m). There are 40 volcanoes in Nicaragua, some of the active. Five groups of these volcanoes are to be found in the Marrabios range, which is 70 km long. These five groups are San Cristobal, Telica, Rota, Pilas, and Momotombo. Of Nicaragua's forty volcanoes only three—Telica, Cerro Negro and El Hoyo—have erupted in recent years.

Nicaragua's principal rivers are the Coco, also known as Segovia, which is 685 km long and empties into the Caribbean Sea (475 km of its length forms the frontier with Honduras), the Rio Grande de Matagalpa (430 km), the Tuma (200 km), which is a tributary of the Rio Grande and on which is built the largest dam in Central America, and the Prinzapolca (301 km), of whose course more than half is navigable.

Nicaragua's most important lakes are Lake Managua or Xolotlan (1,042 sq.km at 50 m above sea level), on which lies the capital, and Lake Nicaragua or Cocibolca (8,029 sq.km at 33 m above sea level), which has about five hundred small islands and is linked with Lake Managua by the Tipitapa River and with the Caribbean Sea by the San Juan River. Lake Nicaragua is separated from the Pacific Ocean by a zone of low hills, which in its narrowest part measures about 20 kilometres. The lake, although it has fresh water, contains sea fish.

Nicaragua's climate is warm and humid on the east coast, where the median temperature is 26°C and annual rainfall averages 667 cm. It is drier on the west coast, where the annual mean temperature is 28°C but the annual rainfall averages only 191 cm. In the highlands the climate is more temperate. The rainy season (winter) extends from May to November in the western part of the country. In the east it rains almost the year round.
Brief history: The aboriginal population of Nicaragua included the Misquito, who lived on the western coast of the country, the Sumo in the river valleys of the central range, the Mangue, who inhabited today's north-western districts, the Nahoa in the most mountainous parts of that region, and the Niquirano along the Pacific coast. The Niquirano or Nicarao and the Chorotega were descendants of the Nahua and Toltec civilizations.

Columbus touched on Nicaraguan territory at a point he called Gracias a Dios. He proceeded to the south and reached the mouth of the San Juan River on September 16, 1502. There he landed and took possession of the area on behalf of the kings of Spain. The actual conquest was launched by Gil Gonzales Davila and Andres Nino in 1522. In 1539 Nicaragua became a dependency of the General Captainry of Panama and four years later was incorporated in the General Captainry of Guatemala. On April 30, 1838, Nicaragua left the Central American Federation, when the country proclaimed its absolute independence at the constitutent assembly held in Chinandega.

The period between 1825 and 1848 was marked by a constant struggle between the Liberals and the Conservatives, and the capital was moved several times from Leon to Granada and vice versa (Leon was the Liberal stronghold and Granada the Conservative).

In the second half of the 1840s began an intensive clash of interests between the United States and Great Britain regarding the construction of a canal through Nicaragua, linking the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. This struggle was reflected in a constant civil war racking the country and keeping it in chaos. In the midst of the turmoil, the United States employed the adventurer William Walker to undermine the independence of Nicaragua and thus to endanger that of all of Central America. Walker landed in Nicaragua in 1855, proclaimed himself President and ordered the institution of slavery. Two years later most of the countries in the area joined forces and Walker with his mercenaries was driven out. Thus ended, for the time being, the imperialist intervention.

However, this United States interference in Nicaragua continued and U.S. Marines landed in the country and occupied it until 1925. Washington also forced upon Nicaragua the signing of the Bryan-Chamorro Treaty in 1914, which gave the U.S. the right to build a canal through its territory. The U.S. Marines once again occupied Nicaragua in 1926, but encountered persistent and heroic resistance by Augusto Cesar Sandino, who, for seven years, at the head of an army of several hundred men, engaged in more than 500 clashes and battles with the Marines trying vainly to drive him out of the Las Segovias mountains.

On May 4, 1927, the United States signed what became known as the Boxthorn Pact with the local liberal and conservative bourgeoisie. The occupiers organized a National Guard, which was initially commanded by U.S. officers, but in 1933 was placed under the command of Anastasio Somoza Garcia. In the same year the U.S. Marines left the country after having first installed as its President Juan Bautista Sacasa. Sandino agreed to discuss peace, but was betrayed and assassinated by Somoza Garcia on orders of the U.S. Embassy. In 1936 Somoza carried out a coup and established a dicatorship of the Somoza dynasty. Anastasio Somoza Garcia—known as "Tacho"—stayed in power from 1933 to 1956, when he was assassinated by Rigoberto Lopez Perez. However, the presidency was assumed by Luis Somoza. In 1961, the Sandinist Front of National Liberation (FSLN) was founded by youth from different strata of the population, mainly proletarian, as well as by veterans of the original Sandino forces who had survived the massacre of 1934. The FSLN became a clandestine organization dedicated to the overthrow of the tyranny. In armed struggle it began to gain experience, with fighting taking place in 1963, 1967 and 1970. Anastasio Somoza Debayle assumed power in 1967 and made himself in effect Nicaragua's head of state for life.

The FSLN was joined in its unswerving opposition to Somoza by the Nicaraguan Socialist Party. Armed actions against the dictatorship were renewed openly in 1974. The revolutionary organizations denounced on different occasions the overt involvement of the United States in the repression of the peasants and the common people of Nicaragua in general. At that time there were in the country 423 U.S. Rangers acting as "advisers" in intelligence and counter-insurgency operations. The United States steadily increased its aid to Somoza. His power was based on financial aid from international organizations dominated by the United States, such as the International Development Bank, the International Development Agency and other official institutions, as well as national and private commercial banks in the United States, Japan, Canada, West Germany, Israel and Spain. In 1977 Nicaragua received military aircraft from Spain in addition to military assistance coming from the United States. By 1976 Nicaragua's foreign debt had risen to 1,087,000,000 dollars and the country's economy was controlled by U.S. investors, who accounted for 80% of the total foreign investments in Nicaragua through 59 transnational enterprises. Moreover, Somoza controlled 95% of the national economy, both domestic and international transport, the best farmland, and the key branches of the small manufacturing industry. The insurgents continuously denounced the corruption and plunder of the country by the Somoza family and by officers of the National Guard, who exploited houses of prostitution, cabarets, night clubs, gambling facilities, tourist centres, etc.

A violent earthquake on December 23, 1972, destroyed more than 60% of Managua and left 14,000 dead and more than 200,000 people homeless. The international aid sent to Nicaragua to alleviate the effects of this disaster was embezzled by Somoza and his henchmen, who did nothing for the reconstruction of the capital or to help the victims of the earthquake. In January 1978 a violent popular uprising broke out, which culminated when Somoza fled from the country on July 17, 1979, and when, two days later, the Sandinista forces entered Managua and a Provisional Reconstruction Junta assumed power.

As soon as the Government of National Reconstruction took office in 1979, it disbanded the National Guard, abrogated Somoza's constitution, and ordered the confiscation of all the property of the dictator's family and its followers. Sandinista militias were formed and a large-scale literacy campaign was initiated throughout Nicaragua with the help of volunteers from Cuba, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and other countries.

The resignation in April 1980 of two members of the leadership of the Government of National Reconstruction, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and Alfonso Robelo, brought into the open a crisis between the most conservative sectors of the bourgeoisie and the revolutionary people.

A propaganda campaign against Nicaragua was launched by the United States, making use of the military regimes in Guatemala and Honduras, and the genocidal junta in El Salvador, to threaten the Nicaraguan people with attack. Closely collaborating with the United States in this propaganda campaign and preparations for aggression and sabotage of all kinds were former Somoza henchmen who had fled to the neighbouring countries, almost all of them former members of the tyrant's National Guard.

It became subsequently known that there were several camps in the United States where mercenaries were being trained for invading Nicaragua with Washington's assistance.

In 1980, the Nicaraguan revolution marked the first year of its victory in the midst of a struggle to achieve progress and to overcome an economic crisis aggravated by constant United States pressure and aggressiveness and by the fact that Washington has cancelled the economic aid it had promised Nicaragua, trying to stifle its people by all possible means.

Economy: Nicaragua's GNP in 1978 amounted to 1,863,900,000 dollars and its annual growth over the period 1960-1978 was 5.8%. In the same period per capita GNP had risen at the annual rate of 2.7%.

The key sectors of the national economy are agriculture and industry, which account for about half of the GNP and which employ 60% of the economically active population. In 1978, the cumulative value of agricultural production had risen 12.4% compared with the rate of 6% in 1976. Industrial output in 1977 was 0.1% down compared with the year before, while building activity was down 41%.

In the course of the first three years of a National Plan of Reconstruction and Development (1975-1979) the economy did not grow as envisaged. Embezzelment of public funds and plunder of the national economy by Somoza and his followers were pushing the country into an ever-greater crisis, which could not be alleviated by foreign loans. These merely increased Nicaragua's indebtedness abroad and most of them fell into the insatiable hands of the dictator and his camarilla.

More than a third of the national economy was directly or indirectly controlled by the Somoza family, which, in addition, had invested huge funds in other countries in the region.

The victorious revolution that had toppled Somoza found the country impoverished, plundered and with a huge foreign debt, especially to the United States. There were more than 200,000 unemployed and 64% of the population was engaged in agricultural work. 82% of the rural population was earning the average of 200 dollars per year. 80% of the foreign investments in Nicaragua were owned by U.S. interests, which controlled most industrial enterprises, the tourist facilities, banking, commerce, manufacturing industry, and petroleum prospecting concessions.

The country's main agricultural crop is maize, followed by cotton and rice. Coffee is also produced.

An imbalance between exports and imports had grown in recent years. Practically all of Nicaragua's foreign trade was oriented towards the United States.

When the revolution prevailed, drastic measures were taken to deal with the acute economic crisis. All the property of the Somoza family and of the dictatorship's civilian and military officials was confiscated. Private banks and financial enterprises were nationalised, and operations of foreign-owned banks were strictly regulated. The withdrawal of 500 and 1,000 cordoba banknotes made it possible for the revolutionary government to recover 18,000,000 dollars worth of Nicaraguan currency, which had been taken out of the country by the fleeing Somoza followers.

Other economic sectors taken over by the revolutionary government included foreign trade and such natural resources as gold and silver.

It became necessary to consider the adoption of a programme of economic revival and, of course, of an agrarian reform. The former has as its intitial objective the re-establishment of the earlier production levels and the elimination of the damage caused by the war against the Somoza tyranny.

The government's Economic Revival Plan also calls for a reduction of the inflation rate, which has reached 60%, and to maintain it at between 20% and 23%, which in a way corresponds to normal under the current economic situation in the world.

In the course of a national reconstruction process aimed at overcoming the tragic heritage of the Somoza rule, and having to counter at the same time economic and military pressures from abroad, the Sandinist Front of National Liberation asked the people of Nicaragua on the occasion of the second anniversary of the victory of the Sandinist revolution to approve new laws. These laws, which were approved by an overwhelming majority of the population, and were proclaimed on Managua's July 19 Square, institute an agrarian reform and provide against withdrawal of capital from enterprises. One hundred thousand Nicaraguan peasants, who had been traditionally neglected and exploited, living under inhuman conditions and earning vast profits for the estate owners, now became masters of the land they tilled.

Government: Prior to the victory of the revolution, executive power was exercised by the President of the Republic under a constitution which was abrogated by the revolution.

The legislature was bicameral, with a Senate of 30 members elected for a term of six years and a Chamber of Deputies of 70 members elected for the same term. The judicial system had at its top a Supreme Court in Managua, to which were subordinated courts of the second instance and of the first instance, as well as local tribunals.

The country is divided administratively into 16 regions and one special district, and a total of 120 townships. The regions are: Boaco, Carazo, Chinandega, Chontales, Esteli, Granada, Jinotega, Leon, Madriz, Managua, Masaya, Matagalpa, Nueva Segovia, Rio San Juan, Rivas, Zelaya, and Aguas Interiores.

When the revolution prevailed, a Provisional Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction was installed on July 19, 1979, made up of Sergio Ramirez, Violeta Chamorro, Alfredo Robelo, Daniel Ortega, and Moises Hassen. Later the Junta was reduced to three members only—Daniel Ortega Saavedra, who acts as Coordinator, Rafael Cordova Rivas from the Conservative Democratic Party, and Sergio Ramirez.

There is also a Government Council acting as an auxiliary body of the Junta and made up of ministers in charge of the most important sectors in the country.

The current ministries are those of defence, the interior, foreign affairs, planning, finance, industry, foreign trade, domestic trade, agricultural development, transport, construction, social welfare, labour, education, culture, housing, health, international reconstruction fund, reconstruction of Managua, justice, fisheries, mines and fuels, development of the Atlantic coast, and tourism.

Armed forces: Under the Somoza dictatorship Nicaragua's armed forces had 1,200 men, while a National Guard, whose duty was to suppress the population and to guard the dictator, had 9,500 men. National Guard officers formed a privileged group, which exploited business and had access to illicit trade with smuggled goods. With the help of the National Guard, Somoza banned trade unions and peasant movements, massacred his opponents, and instituted a reign of terror in the country. The officers of the National Guard were trained in the United States or in special U.S. schools, such as those operating in the Panama Canal Zone.

The Sandinista People's Army emerged from the armed struggle of the people and replaced the National Guard when the revolution prevailed. Organizationally it is divided according to military regions and its commander-in-chief is Humberto Ortega.

There is also a Ministry of Defence, which is headed by the commander-in-chief. The National Sandinista Police and Department of State Security are subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior.

A Sandinista Air Force is being organized and there is a Corps of Frontier Guards.

The formation of the Sandinista People's Militias is being accelerated. They are organized in battalions and regiments, and have a General Staff which is presided over by the Vice-Minister of Defence.

Organizations: Nicaragua's main political party is the Sandinista Front of National Liberation (FSLN), founded in the 1960s by rebel youth and veterans of the struggle waged by Augusto Cesar Sandino. There are other political parties supporting the Nicaraguan revolution: the Nicaraguan Socialist Party (PSN), the Indpendent Liberal Party (PLI), and the Social Christian People's Party (PPSC). All of them are members of the Patriotic Front of the Revolution (FPR).

The Nicaraguan Communist Party is not a member of the FPR.

Opposing the revolutionary process are the Nicaraguan Democratic Movement Party (MDN), the Social Christian Party (PSC), the Democratic Conservative Party (PCD), the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and the Liberal Constitutional Party (PLC).

The workers' organizations supporting the revolution are the Sandinista Workers' Centre (CST), the Trade Union Action and Unity Centre (CAUS), which is Communist, the General Workers' Centre (CGT-i), which is Socialist, and the Sandinista Association of Farm Workers' (ATC).

The trade-union organizations opposing the Sandinista control of the revolutionary process are the Social Christian Centre of Nicaraguan Workers (CTN) and the Confederation of Trade Union Unification (CUS).

Other social organizations include the Luisa Amanda Espinosa Women's Association (AMLAE), the July 19th Youth (JS-19), the Union of Nicaraguan Journalists (UPN), the Miskito, Suno and Rama Association (MITSURASATA), the National Assocation of Educators (ANDEN), and the National Association of Clergy (ANCLEN).

Other important organizations include the High Council of Private Enterprise (COSEP), which associates the chambers of construction and industry and the Union of Agricultural Producers, and others. Then there is the Federation of Public Health Workers, which split away from the CTN, the National Council of Higher Education, the University Centre of the National University, and others of lesser significance, among them a women's organization of the bourgeois political parties.

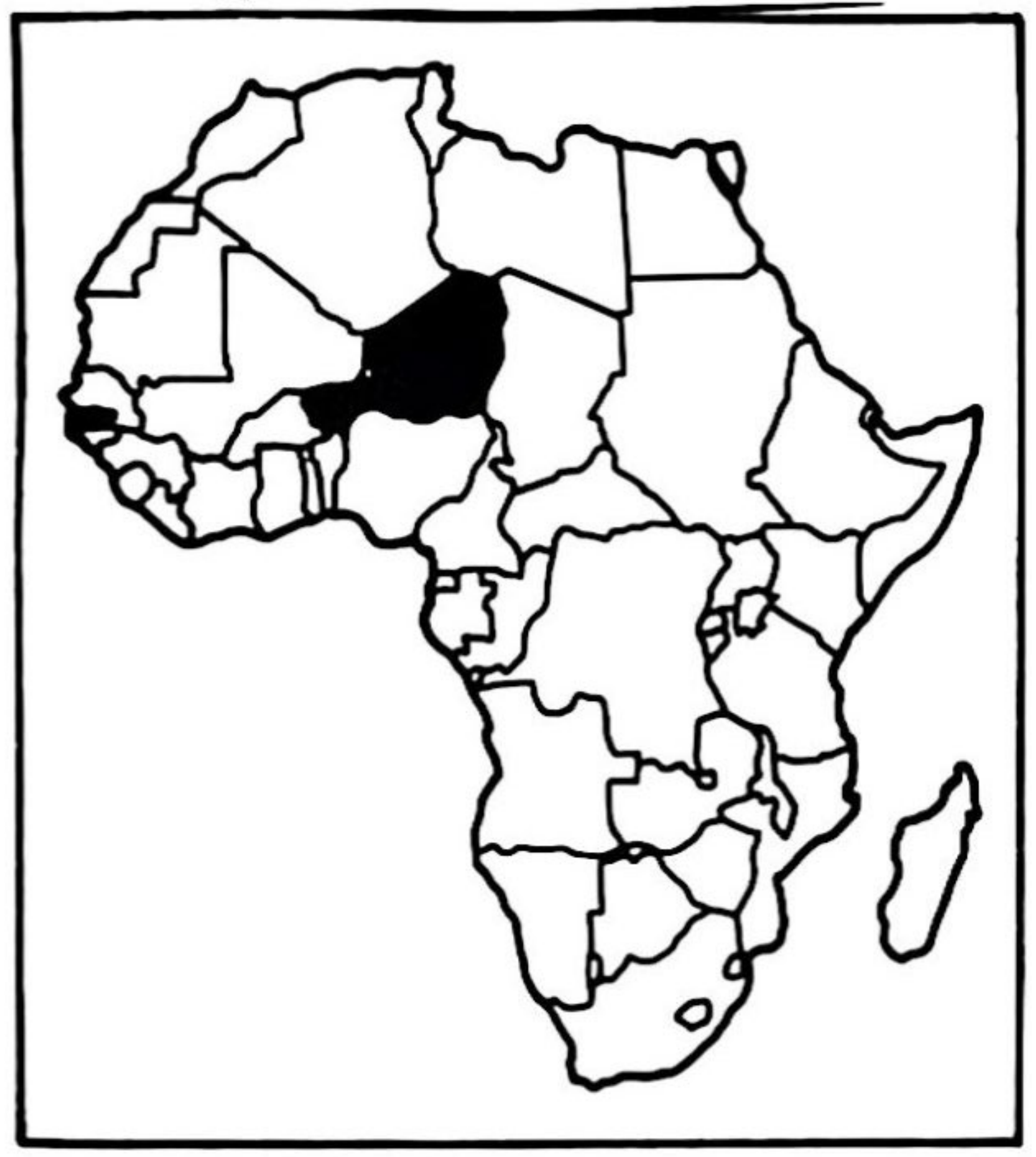
Education: Nicaragua's illiteracy rate is one of the highest in Central America. According to 1971 data, it is 70% of the total population, while the student population barely amounts to 19% of the total. The earthquake which flattened Managua, where the concentration of schools was the greatest, destroyed many of those institutions and they were not reconstructed in spite of the large amounts of aid sent to the country, but appropriated by Somoza, his family and friends. School attendance is very low.

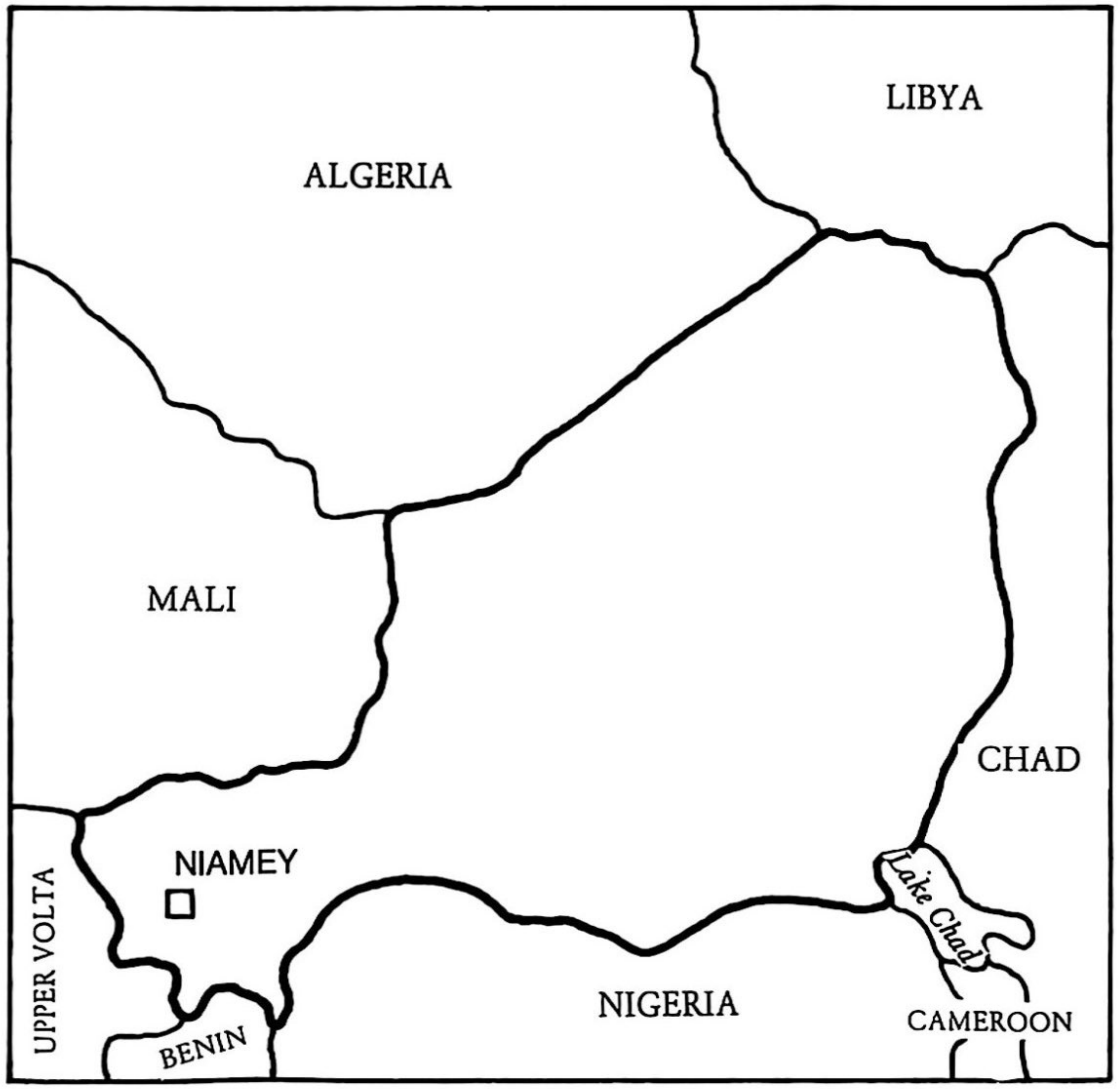
In the course of its first year in power, the revolutionary government launched a large-scale literacy campaign.

Public health: There is one doctor in Nicaragua for every 1,538 inhabitants, and life expectancy is only 51 years. The infant mortality rate is 130 per thousand live-born babies. The earthquake destroyed many hospital facilities in the country, which were not rebuilt. This added still further to the very poor state of public health in Nicaragua under the Somoza dictatorship.

Religion: There is freedom of religion. 94% of the population are Roman Catholics, while about 4% profess Protestant creeds.

NIGER




LIBYA
ALGERIA
MALI
CHAD
NIAMEY
UPPER VOLTA
Lake Chad
NIGERIA
CAMEROON
BENIN

Official Name: Republic of Niger.
Area: 1,267,000 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Niger has a common frontier with Algeria and Libya, in the east with Chad, in the south with Nigeria and Benin, in the southwest with Upper Volta, and in the west with Mali.
Population: 5,353,266 inhabitants in 1979. In 1978, the annual rate of population growth was 2.9%. The main ethnic groups are the Haussa, the Djerma, the Songhai, the Fulani, the Tuaregs and Berbers.
Capital: Niamey (300,000 inhabitants, 1978 estimate).
Principal towns: Zinder, Maradi, Tahoua, Agadez, Birni.
Languages: French is the official language. Also spoken are a number of African languages, including Fulani, Tamashek, Djerma, Songhai, and Haussa.
Public holidays: August 3, Independence Day; December 18, Proclamation of the Republic Day.
Geography: Niger—a landlocked country—lies in the western part of the African continent, some 600 km from the nearest sea-coast. Its northern region is arid, due to the influence of the Sahara; the desert covers about 80% of the territory. In the south the climate is tropical and the savanna prevails. In the western part of the country flows the Niger, the third longest river of the African continent and one whose basin ranks among the largest in Africa. In spite of the desert climate in the north and the semi-arid conditions prevalent in the south, the country is mainly agricultural and pastoral in character. Nomadic tribes drive their herds in quest of pastures and sources of water, which are scarce during the long dry seasons.

Niger's territory is a semi-desert plateau with the average elevation of 300 m. In the northern and central parts the terrain rises much higher. In the Air massif, Mt. Greboun is 2,000 m. high and Mt. Tamgak 1,800 m., there are also the Bagouezane Mountains and further to the south the Tegama Massif. In the extreme south-east of Niger's territory lies the northwestern part of Lake Chad.

Brief history: As early as the 10th century, present-day Niger belonged to that part of western Africa that was occupied by the kingdoms of the Sudan. In the subsequent centuries its territory was successively dominated by the Arabs, the Berbers, the Ghanaians, the Malis, the Songhais, the Bornu and the Haussa Empires, the Fulanis and the Tuaregs, all ethnic groups which co-existed in constant confrontation in the quest to dominate the region.

In the 16th century the Moroccans occupied a part of Niger and spread the Moslem religion. The Fulani were the most receptive to Islam, and it was then when the wars of Islamic reform began.

The Sokoto and Al Hajj Umar kingdoms dominated the area when the Europeans arrived in the 19th century. Already then, the area was divided between two main centres —the north with a Moslem population, and the south where African animist cults prevailed. The arrival of the Europeans further aggravated these differences.

It was the French who reached Niger along the Senegal River and in 1898 turned the "territories of the Middle Niger" into an autonomous military area. The northern regions of Air and the southern region of Tibesti were not colonized until the eve of World War I. Air was occupied in 1906 and incorporated in French West Africa, while the western part of Tibesti was seized in 1914. The native inhabitants put up resistance but eventually the French occupied the whole area by force of arms and in 1921 organized its colonial exploitation.

Just as it did in other countries, in Niger, too, French colonialism distinguished itself by its utter disregard for the native population, by an absence of the fundamental civil rights and freedoms, and by an arbitrary exercise of power. Moreover, the metropolitan power imposed its own socio-economic structures on the colony, which it exploited as a supplier of cheap raw materials and as a source of cheap native labour for the manufacture of semi-finished products or for the completion of various manufacturing procedures. In other words, the underdeveloped state of the colony served the interests of an industrialized consumer society. After World War II, the underdeveloped countries fully realized their situation and began to demand their freedom in different ways. In order to sidetrack the liberation movement, the government in Paris then established a Union of Associated States, designed to cover up their colonial exploitation. Thus Niger got the status of an "overseas territory" and the first elections were held to set up a Territorial Assembly. Subsequently, it was turned into a National Assembly as both a representative and a consultative body.

In 1946, the Niger Progressive Party (PPN) was founded as a section of the African Democratic Assembly (RDA), whose congress it attended in the same year. The declared objective of the PPN was the unity of all of the country's progressive forces, but its leaders actually collaborated with the French colonialists. Consequently, the most progressive forces within that political group then established the Niger Democratic Union after having caused the fall of the PPN. In 1957, this new organization adopted the name of Liberation Party (Sawaba) and joined the African Socialist Movement as a section. After the enactment of the "Framework Law" in France, Niger acquired the status of internal autonomy in 1957.

In elections held in that year, the Sawaba won a smashing victory and its leader, Djibo Bakary, was appointed President of the Executive Council. The African Socialist Movement then demanded independence immediately, but the French responded with fierce repression and persecution of their opponents. Nevertheless, the French Union of Associated States, which had been weakened by the independence of the peoples of Indochina was dissolved in 1958. On September 28, 1958, a referendum was held in Niger on the statute of the French Community. In spite of small voter participation in the referendum, which was opposed by the African Socialist Movement—only 25% of the electorate voted—the colonialists imposed on Niger their statute, which permitted them to extend their domination of the country. Then they forced the Bakary government to resign and helped the rise to power of the PPN's Hamani Diori, who did not trust the workers, claiming that they were "politically inept". The PPN called for independence by "peaceful means" and in coordination with the colonial authorities. In October 1959, the Diori regime outlawed the Sawaba Party and imprisoned many of those of its leaders who could not find asylum in other African countries. Members of progressive organizations of the people were also persecuted and jailed, including leaders and members of the Union of Democratic Youth and of the Progressive Union of Women.

On August 3, 1960, Niger and ten other African states that had been under French colonial rule obtained their independence. However, this formal move did not change the actual position of the country with respect to France, which continued to dominate its economy through multinational corporations, in particular the French West Africa Company. In the course of the 1960s, the Sawaba Party organized resistance on the territory of Niger and formed the Patriotic Democratic Front, which was open to all national patriotic forces. Djibo Bakary and other Sawaba leaders enjoyed the support of the Haussa peasants, the Tuaregs and the youth of Niger. In 1964 they launched an offensive against the pro-colonial regime, but without success, and the Hamani Diori government suppressed all signs of opposition. In October of that year, four Sawaba members were publicly executed in Niger's capital. The next year, Hamani Diori escaped unhurt an assassination attempt and was re-elected President, just as again in 1970, when two changes in the cabinet took place. The government granted a concession to an American consortium for petroleum prospecting on an area of approximately 30,000 sq.km. Two West German companies concluded a contract with the Niger government for the construction of a coal-mining complex in the town of Magaria in the eastern part of the country. The necessary investments were estimated at 1,200,000 francs and the annual output at 56,000 tons. In addition, a joint company with Italian, West German, French and Niger government capital was set up for the extraction of uranium in the Arlit mines at the foot of the Air Range, which contain considerable reserves of this rare mineral. Japan showed interest in financially participating in this multinational consortium. Annual production is estimated at about 1,500 tons of uranium concentrate.

Hit by a severe drought lasting from 1968 to 1974, Niger suffered from a serious economic crisis.

On April 15, 1974, the Hamani Diori government was overthrown in a military coup led by General Seyni Kountche. When he assumed the leadership of the country, Kountche set free political prisoners and allowed exiles to return home, among them Djibo Bakary, the leader of the Sawaba Party. He also tightened the traditional economic and political ties with France.

The next year, Kountche signed co-operation agreements with the independent African states and with a number of socialist countries.

In 1976 Kountche frustrated a coup and later detained several cabinet ministers. He also took over the command of the armed forces. Killed in the abortive coup were the Minister of Defence, the Director of Information, the Chief of the Security Forces and one of the President's bodyguards. Several leaders of different political organizations were arrested, including Djibo Bakary, the Sawaba leader, who only a few months earlier had returned from his exile in Guinea.

In 1977 the President of Niger met in Niamey with the Presidents of Algeria, Mali and Chad, and with a representative of the Libyan government, in order to agree on a common strategy to counter imperialist machinations in the Sahel area. In the same year. the Niger government arrested many students from the National School of Administration, who protested against the educational system.

In 1978 the government ordered the release of a group of political prisoners, including members of the overthrown government of Hamani Diori. Hamani Diori himself and Djibo Bakary were released in April 1980.

In February 1980 the cabinet was re-organized in an attempt to improve the situation in the country suffering from an economic crisis, and the Ministers of Mining and Water Resources, of Economy and of Post and Telecommunications were replaced.

The changes in the government continued in June 1980. The number of military men in the cabinet was raised by one to the total of seven, while the number of civilians was ten.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the maintstays of the national economy. Agriculture is pursued on 15,000,000 out of the total of 126,670,000 hectares of cultivable land by 95% of the economically active population, estimated at 1,217,000 in 1970. According to FAO figures, they produced in 1978 109,000 tons of millet, 361,000 tons of sorghum, 74,000 tons of peanuts, 180,000 tons of manioc, and 34,000 tons of rice. In the livestock sector there were 2,990,000 head of cattle, 6,700,000 goats, 2,660,000 sheep, 227,000 horses, and 437,000 donkeys. Niger's forests produced 2,862,000 cu.m. of timber in

1977, while the fishing industry reported a catch of 74,000 tons.

The mining industry centres on the extraction and export of uranium (4,350 tons in 1980), mainly through the *Societe des Mines de l'Air* (SOMAIR), in which the state of Niger holds only a 33% share, while the rest is owned by French, Belgian and West German companies. Niger has the world's fifth largest uranium reserves (160,000 tons) and uranium accounts for 70 to 80% of its exports. It is estimated that at the present rate of exploitation, the reserves will be exhausted within 30 years. At the beginning of 1981, the French consortiums, which extract more than a half of Niger's uranium, announced that the price of this mineral had dropped by 35% on the world market, which development would greatly reduce Niger's foreign-exchange earnings.

Other industrial sectors produced in 1976 38,000 tons of cement and 70 million kWh of electricity in addition to textiles, food and other goods. According to available data, Niger's gross national product amounted to 1,100,000,000 dollars in 1978, and in per capita terms to 220 dollars. The national budget for fiscal year 1978 was balanced at 41,560 million CFA francs, while the 1977 balance of trade showed a surplus of 2,900 million CFA francs, due to 39,900 million CFA francs of exports and 37,000 million CFA francs of imports. According to World bank figures, Niger's foreign debt was 58,000 million CFA francs in 1980. Its known foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 101,400,000 dollars in 1977, when the cost of living was 220% higher than in 1970. The national currency is the CFA franc.

Niger is one of the world's 25 poorest couuntries, in spite of its great uranium wealth. Its situation deteriorated in the last decade due to eight years of drought, which caused a 40% loss in crops and the death of half the country's livestock herds.

Government: General Seyni Kountche is the head of a Supreme Military Council that has ruled the country since it seized power by a coup in April 1974.

The country is divided administratively into seven departments—each governed by a prefect—which are subdivided into 32 districts.

The Supreme Military Council has both executive and legislative power. Subsequently, the National Development Council was created and entrusted with the realization of urgent projects of national interest, primarily the consturuction of water reservoirs and irrigation works, which would help prevent the disastrous effects of the droughts plaguing the country.

Armed forces: Niger established its own armed forces in 1961 to replace the French colonial troops. At that time it had an infantry force and a small air force. At present Niger's armed forces are estimated to consist of 4,000 men. There are still French army specialists and instructors in the country, which also gets military assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany, especially for its air force.

Organizations: No political parties are permitted to function. In September 1976, the Union of Niger Workers held its ninth regular congress in Niamey under the motto "The worker and trade unionism", at which the Minister of Labour urged the union's members to drop their demands for the time being and to turn the trade unions into a responsible body concerned with the economic future of the country.

In April 1978, the town of Maradi played host to the Third National Youth Festival, which also included seminars on socio-economic development and on the role youth should play in the national construction effort.

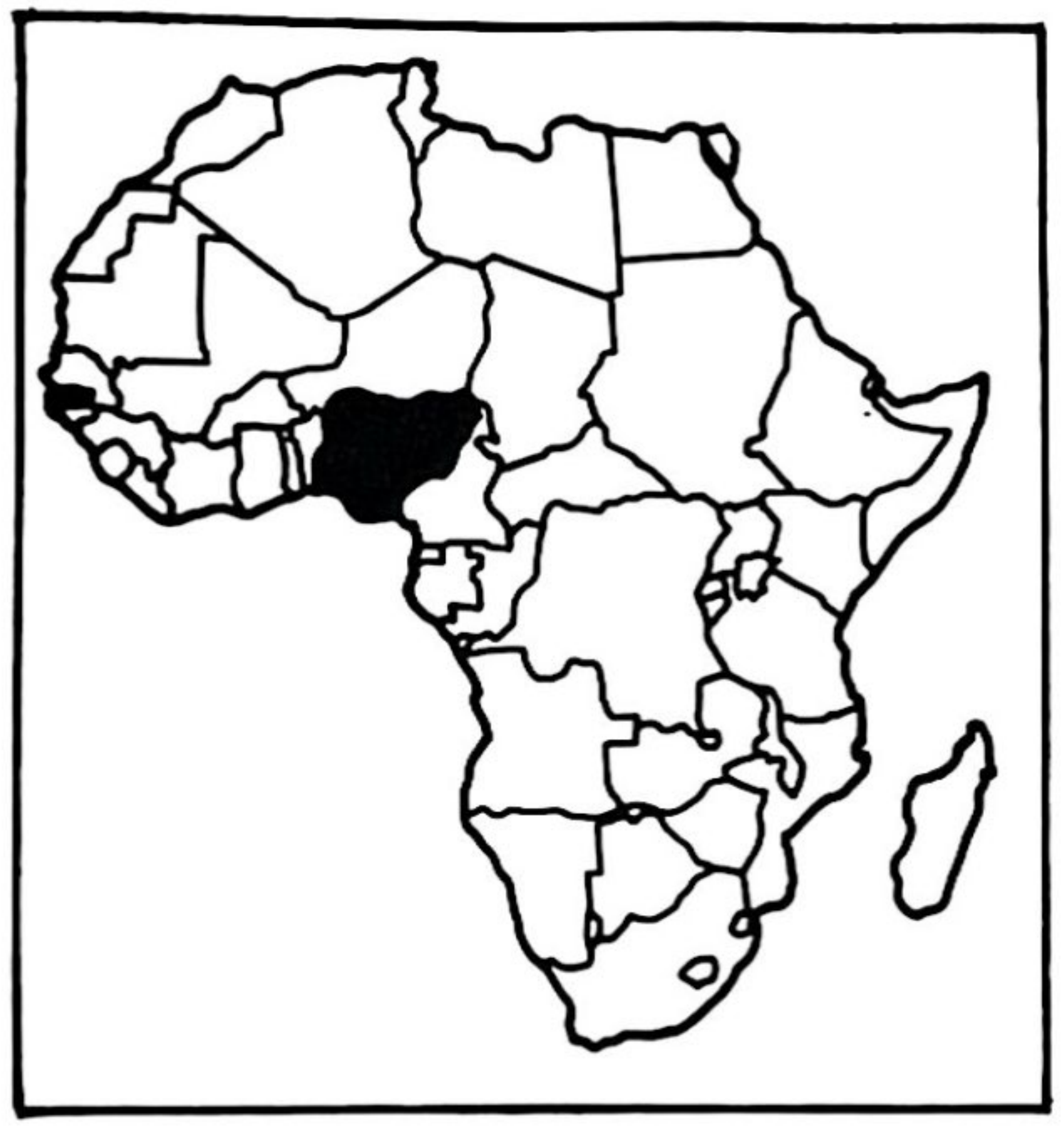
Education and sports: In 1979 only 17% of school-age children attended classes. In the school-year 1977-78 there were 1,401 primary schools with 177,620 pupils and 107 secondary schools with 44,211 students, but these figures do not fully reflect the real situation. Most of the children who begin attending the first form do not pass to the second. In the capital there is a university, inaugurated in 1973, which has an enrolment of 782 students. Six hundred young Nigerans study abroad. Construction began in 1976 of an Islamic University of West Africa at Say.

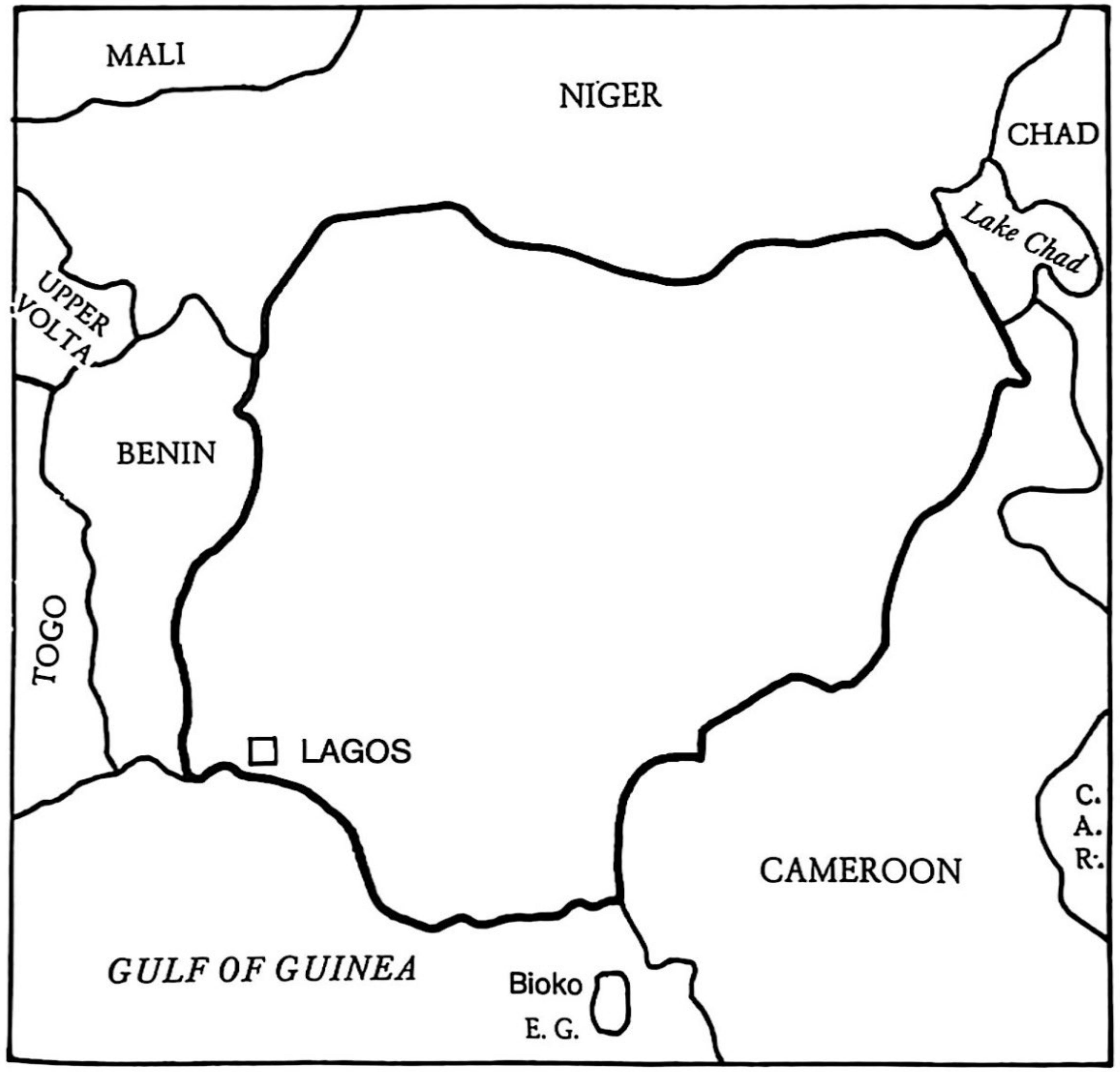
Athletics, boxing, basketball, football, swimming and judo are popular. Athletes from Niger have distinguished themselves in competitions held within the framework of the African continent and have participated in world competitions as well.

Public health: There is one hospital bed in Niger for every 1,525 inhabitants and in 1976 there was one practising doctor for every 47,300 inhabitants.

Religion: Approximately 85% of Niger's population are Moslems and the rest practise different animist cults. There are also several Roman Catholic missions active in the country.

NIGERIA




MALI
NIGER
CHAD
Lake Chad
UPPER VOLTA
BENIN
TOGO
LAGOS
CAMEROON
C. A. R.
GULF OF GUINEA
Bioko
E. G.

Official name: The Federal Republic of Nigeria.
Area: 923,768 sq.km.
Borders: In the north it borders on Niger, in the south on the Atlantic Ocean, in the west on Benin, in the south-east and east on the Cameroon, and in the north-east on Chad.
Population: 82,700,000 inhabitants in 1980. Annual rate of population growth is 2.7%. The principal ethnic groups are the Hausa, the Fulani, the Yoruba and the Ibo. Every fourth African is a Nigerian.
Capital: Lagos (3,500,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Ibadan, Ogfomosho, Kano, Abeokuta, Port Harcourt.
Languages: English is the official language, but some 300 African languages and dialects are spoken in the country.
Public holidays: October 1, Independence Day.
Geography: Nigeria lies on the African coast of the Atlantic Ocean in the Gulf of Guinea. The Niger River, the third major African stream, enters the country from Benin and flows in a general south-easterly direction to its confluence with the Benue River, from where it turns south until it empties through a large delta into the Gulf of Guinea.

Nigeria has two distinct geographical regions. In the south is a plain of seabed and alluvial sediments, while its north and centre are characterized by highlands cut only by the valleys of the Niger and Benue rivers. These valleys divide the interior into three parts of which the highest and most extensive are the northern highlands of Bauchi and Jos. Generally speaking, the highlands, criss-crossed by many streams, rise into mountain ranges running in different directions.

Next to the Niger, the country's most important river is the Benue, which, together with the former, constitutes Africa's longest waterway. Its tributaries include the Gongola, the Donga, the Sokoto, the Kaduna, and the Anambra. In the north-west the rivers, such as the Komadugu, the Yobe and the Komadugu Gana, empty into Lake Chad. The most important of the coastal rivers are the Ogun, which empties into the ocean in the port of Lagos, and the Benin, which is formed by the confluence of the Jamieson and the Sapele.

Forests cover 34.2% of Nigeria's territory and their wood is highly valued in the furniture industry, especially mahogany, which is shipped through river ports on the Benin and Sapele rivers.

There are rich deposits of tin, columbite, gold, tungsten and coal. Nigeria also has vast petroleum reserves, which make it one of Africa's two principal producers of this vital commodity.

The climate is tropical—humid and hot—with a dry and a rainy season, although there exist considerable variations in the different parts of the country.

Brief history: As much as we know today, the territory of present-day Nigeria has been inhabited since ancient times by peoples of different levels of economic and social development, the most important of whom have been the Hausa and the Fulani in the north, the Yoruba in the south-west and the Ibo in the south-east. All of them have played a decisive role in the course of Nigerian history.

The Hausa, who occupied the north-west, subsequently expanded down the Niger Valley and in the 10th to 11th centuries formed something of a confederation of city-states, which were gradually converted to Islam, especially in the 14th century. The Hausa were farmers, but their vigorous merchants succeeded in establishing an extensive system of barter and trade throughout the Central Sudan, and maintained important trading routes across the Sahara, linking them with North Africa and the Middle East. Their cities were fortified centres of handicrafts processing iron, leather and wool.

The Yoruba—according to many authors—were distinguished by the formation of urbanized peasant communities and by their organization of political power in semi-democratic monarchies in which the chieftain (Oba), whose office was sacred in character, exercised his authority in a precarious balance with the power of minor chiefs and secret societies. The most important Yoruba kingdoms were those of Ile-Ife and Oyo, which wielded great influence in all of southern Nigeria and on the territory of the present-day republics of Benin (the former French Dahomey) and Togo.

The Ibo people in south-eastern Nigeria seem to have had a less advanced socio-political organization than the Hausa and the Yoruba, due perhaps to their lesser material progress and to some external factors.

During the last years of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th, the Fulani religious leader, Usman Dan Fodio, organized a "holy war" against the "corrupt" Islamic leaders of the Hausa and against other "infidels", such as the Yoruba. The latter, however, were able to contain his advance in 1808.

The war against Dan Fodio, but especially the incessant hunting and sale of slaves to European merchants, which had gained in intensity throughout the 18th and during the first decades of the 19th century, greatly weakened the Yoruba and facilitated foreign penetration under the pretext of fighting the slave trade and slavery itself. The true objective pursued by hegemonistic British capital was no longer traffic in slaves, but exploitation of some of the country's natural resources through "legitimate commerce". Thus, the British captured Lagos in 1861, after having secured control of Nigeria's central and south-eastern coast in the preceding decade.

Between 1861 and 1914, in which year present-day Nigeria became a geopolitical entity, the rising British imperialism conquered ever more territory, in particular after the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) had recognized the different parts of Nigeria as an "area of British influence". Between 1901 and 1906 the colonialist Lord Lugard conquered the north settled by the Hausa and the Fulani; in 1906, the Protectorates of Lagos and of the Niger Coast were merged into a single one, the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria; finally, the north and south were joined in 1914 as the Protectorate and Colony of Nigeria.

The anti-colonial movement experience a revival, beginning in the 1920s under the leadership of the middle classes—lawyers, doctors, journalists, teachers, small businessmen and lowest-rank public officials—who demanded from the British moderate reforms, such as electoral representation in the Legislative Council. This demand was raised by the Democratic Party of Herbert Macaulay, the Nigerian section of the National Congress of British West Africa, and other small urban groups which were in rivalry with each other, primarily for ethnic reasons.

British colonization aggravated the pre-colonial differences between the northern Moslem theocracies, the animist kingdoms in the south-west and the "village democracies" of the south-east. Nigeria was used as a guinea-pig for testing the system of "indirect administration", developed in theory by Lord Lugard when he served as the governor of the northern provinces (1900-1906) and of all Nigeria (1912-1918), which basically involved the utilization of the traditional chieftainships subordinated to the foreign authority with certain concessions made to the feudal "continuity" of the tribal system. This method paid handsome dividends in the north, where the "neutralized" chiefs were hardly opposed to British colonialism and where there was practically no petty-bourgeois elite cherishing ideas of modernization. In contrast, the south was educationally subjected to missionary work which "educated to evangelize" and which produced there the majority of all Nigeria's administrative personnel and intellectuals. On the eve of indpendence there were five times more educated young people in the south than in the north, and of the 800,000 wage yearners in the country – barely 2% of the total population – almost all worked on the plantations and in the ports and a few industries in the south.

The situation produced by World War II, with its unemployed veterans, workers' strikes against low wages, and boycotts by small plantation owners to raise the prices of their products, accelerated the process of Nigerian nationalism and the emergence of political parties. The three principal parties which came into being between 1945 and 1951 were divided not only along political and ideological lines, but also—and perhaps even more—according to ethnic differences. They were the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), subsequently renamed the National Council of Nigerian Citizens and inspired by the Ibo intellectual Nnamdi Azikiwe, which was the only party trying to become nationwide, was pan-African in its orientation, but was constituted from the beginning by the population of south-eastern Nigeria; the Northern People's Congress (NPC), led by the Hausa intellectual Abubakar Tafawa Balewa and formed by the traditionally conservative Hausa and Fulani communities, and, finally, the Action Group of the Yoruba chief and intellecutal Obafemi Awolowo and almost completely based on the south-western ethnic community. Each of these parties had its adherents in small ethnic minorities living in the "rival" regions.

In contrast to the other two parties, which advocated federalism and broad regional autonomy, the NCNC called for a centralized government. Both in the NCNC and the Action Group, petty-bourgeois radical elements, intellectuals and trade-unionists strove for independence against the polemic about centralism or federalism, which the British constantly encouraged through a series of constitutional amendments (Richards, Mcpherson) between 1947 and 1951.

In spite of the broad internal divisions and the delaying tactics of the colonial government, the two southern regions, officially called the Western Region and the Eastern Region, achieved their internal autonomy in 1957, while the north did so in 1959. After independence elections, the NPC and the NCNC formed a coalition government headed by Tafawa Balewa, who assumed the leadership of the "First Republic" on October 1, 1960.

At the beginning of the period of independence, the Western press described Nigeria as a model of a strong, liberal-bourgeois democracy of a multi-party type. The leaders of the country's principal nationalist parties seemed to be in agreement on the supposed benefits of "free enterprise" and economic liberalism. Until 1966 Nigeria's political scene was characterized by a fierce struggle for the control of the government, which, in turn, opened the door to the control of the national economy by the bureaucratic stratum of the Nigerian bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the conflicting positions held by the different ethnic and tribal communities turned the regional question into the dominant political problem. A coalition between the northerners and the people of the south-east formed a fourth region, Central West, in order to deprive the opposition of the Action Group, with its Yoruba electoral base in the south-west, of the greater constitutency. Subsequently, profiting from a split in that party, the coalition government proclaimed a state of emergency in the western region and arrested the principal leaders of the Action Group.

Two large general strikes swept the country in 1963 and 1964 in protest against bad living conditions, the general level of wages, and corruption in government. In spite of an obviously large northern electoral victory in 1963, Prime Minister Balewa, foreseeing new protests and disturbances, favoured the formation of a "government of national unity". In 1964 the NCNC and the Action Group opposition finally succeeded in uniting in order to confront the most conservative elements of the Nigerian bourgeoisie and the northern chiefs. The two parties formed the Great Progressive United Alliance. On its part, Balewa's NPC, together with a splinter group from the Action Group, the United People's Party of Samuel Akintola, and other political groups, formed the Nigerian National Alliance. Both political groupings consumed themselves in political haggling, which was suddenly stopped on January 15, 1966, when a group of military men physically liquidated Balewa, Akintola (the Premier of Western Nigeria), Sir Ahmadu Bellow (the Premier of Northern Nigeria), and Okotie Eboh, the Minister of Finance in the central government. President Azikiwe escaped in time.

Almost immediately, the putschists, who were apparently led by Major Nzeogu, entrusted the office to the then Chief of Staff, General John Aguiyi Ironsi, who was of Ibo origin.

The new government wanted to abolish federalism and establish a centralized state, adopting a law which unified all regional civil services and authorized officials to serve in any part of the country. In the northern region, which was aroused by the ethnic origin of the leading putschists, this measure was interpreted as favouring the Ibos, the ethnic group which had most qualified cadres. In May 1966 pogroms began against Ibo residents in the north. According to many sources, more than 30,000 Ibos perished in the massacre. On July 29 a new military coup overthrew Ironsi and its leader, General Yakubu Gowon, a member of an ethnic minority from the north, promised a return to decentralization of a federal type.

Gowon, the son of a Protestant catechist, member of a small northern tribe, and a career soldier, graduate of a British military school, was viewed as the best-suited political personality for extricating the federation from the serious crisis it was experiencing, because while being a northerner he was not a Moslem but a Christian, like most of the southerners. Moreover, he was a military man with a higher education and thus a representative of the only institution that seemed strong and stable on the confused political scene in Nigeria of those days.

However, the clashes between the Ibo and the northerners continued in the north of Nigeria and, according to press estimates in September and October of that year, some 1,200,000 to 2,000,000 Ibos fled from that region to the eastern region. Its governor, Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu, who had been appointed by ex-President Ironsi, tried to obtain a greater share of the revenues from the petroleum boom in the region in order to cope with the problem created by the vast influx of the Ibo refugees. His efforts failed when the federation was divided into twelve states, their structure depriving the eastern region of the major areas of petroleum production and thus also removing them from Ojukwu's authority.

On May 30, 1967, three days after the formation of the twelve federated states had been announced, General Ojukwu proclaimed the independence of the eastern region under the name of Biafra. Its population included 8,000,000 Ibos and 5,000,000 people of other ethnic origins: the Ijaw, the Ekoi, the Ibibio and others.

The multinational petroleum corporations, Shell and American Overseas, announced their readiness to pay a share of the petroleum royalities forthcoming from the eastern region directly to General Ojukwu rather than to the federation—as stipulated by the central government. Thereby, the American and British multinational petroleum corporations intervened in Nigeria's internal politics, aiding the secessionists in what became known as the Biafra War. That conflict began on July 6, 1967, and ended on January 15, 1970, after having claimed more than 1,500,000 casualties.

The interest of the Western powers in Nigerian petroleum and in the potential market of that country was reflected in the background of the Biafra conflict and in the obviously ambiguous attitude these powers held towards that war. Great Britain, whose interests Ojukwu had guaranteed to respect, paid the secessionist leader for petroleum concessions, but on the other hand supported the federal blockade of the Biafra ports. On their part, the United States, France and Italy were opposed to the British interests during the Biafra War. Paradoxically, when the war ended, in 1970, Nigeria produced 55,000,000 tons of petroleum, making it Africa's third largest producer of this valuable commodity, which in 1977 earned Nigeria 2,000,000,000 dollars in revenue.

On July 29, 1975, while he was attending a summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity in Kampala, General Gowon was deposed by a military movement headed by General Murtala Ramat Mohammed. In the course of the seven months of his rule—he was assassinated in Lagos on February 14, 1977—Mohamed distinguished himself by his efforts to eradicate administrative corruption, to re-establish the prestige of the federal government, and to give it cohesion and a sense of national unity. He wanted public as well as private Nigerian institutions to have a greater share in the guidance and control of the national economy, which greatly complicated his relations with the United States and Great Britain to the point where the federal authorities ordered the closing of the Lagos office of the United States Information Service and refused to receive the former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger on one of his African tours aimed at a "negotiated" solution of the conflict in Southern Africa.

In its foreign policy, Nigeria held during the Murtala regime such positions in international organizations that were favourable to the struggle against imperialism, apartheid and neocolonialism. It distinguished itself by the effective assistance it provided Angola in that country's war of liberation from the middle of 1975 to March 1976.

After Murtala's death, the presidency was assumed by General Olusegun Obasanjo, who expressed his intention to continue the same policy line as his predecessor.

On September 21, 1978, Obasanjo lifted the ban placed on political parties, and immediately five of them emerged in sufficient strength to qualify for registration and participation in elections. They were: the National Party of Nigeria, which nominated as its presidential candidate Alhaji Shehu Shargari; the Unity Party of Nigeria, whose candidate for the presidency was Obafemi Awolowo; the Nigerian People's Party, which nominated Nnamdi Azikiwe; the People's Redemption Party, led by the progressive Hausa politician Alhaji Aminu Kano, its candidate, and by the former Secretary-General of the Action Group, Sam Ikoku; and, finally, the Great Nigerian People's Party of Alhaji Waziri Ibrahim.

Although the enormous income deriving from petroleum has accentuated the dominance of a truly economic and political class structure in Nigeria's society, the specific ethnic differences of the individual regions gradually prevailed and made the new parties greatly resemble the political parties of the 1960s. Thus, Shagari's NPN served as a nucleus of the representatives of the traditional northern aristocracy turned bourgeois and of their bourgeois allies from the south-eastern coastal area; Awolowo's UPN, which campaigned for "Nigerian socialism", had the support of the traditional aristocracy and the bourgeoisie of the Yoruba in the west; Azikiwe's NPP was supported by the dominant Ibo circles in the east; while the PRP of Aminu Kano and Ikoku formed an already earlier planned grouping of traditional leftist elements rallied around the respected northern leader; finally, Waziri's GNPP expressed, as in the past, the interests of the north-east.

The presidential elections were held in August 1979 according to a complex electoral system and produced the victory of the NPN candidate, Shehu Shagari, who assumed office on October 1, the 19th anniversary of Nigerian independence. The NPN was victorious, and formed the local governments, in seven states; the UPN in five, the NPP in three; the PRP in two; as did the GNPP. The NPN won a majority in eight state assemblies, the UPN in five, the NPP in three, the GNPP in two, and the PRP in one.

The elections produced the following results in the Federal Parliament: the NPN won 168 seats in the lower chamber and 36 seats in the Senate, the UPN 111 and 28, the NPP 8 and 16, the PRP 49 and 7, and the GNPP 43 and 8 respectively.

Shagari's victorious NPN formed an alliance with Azikiwe's NPP in order to obtain a working majority in parliament against the main opposition party, Awolowo's UPN. This situation is an almost exact parallel of the balance of the political forces in the first Nigerian republic in October 1960.

Judging from his statements during his first year in office, Shagari seems to follow a line of political conservatism and economic liberalism. His programme includes an agrarian reform of the "green revolution" type, construction of two million new homes, an accent on education development, an African policy against "racial prejudice, foreign influences and vestiges of colonialism" among other points. Abuja, the geographical centre of Nigeria, will become the federal capital in 1982 or 1983.

The Nigerian Foreign Office supports the proposal of an agreement on non-aggression and mutual assistance for the defence of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), as demonstrated at a meeting held on that pact in Lome, Togo, in May 1980. The same sentiments were expressed by the Nigerian delegation at the OAS summit conference in Freetown in July of the same year.

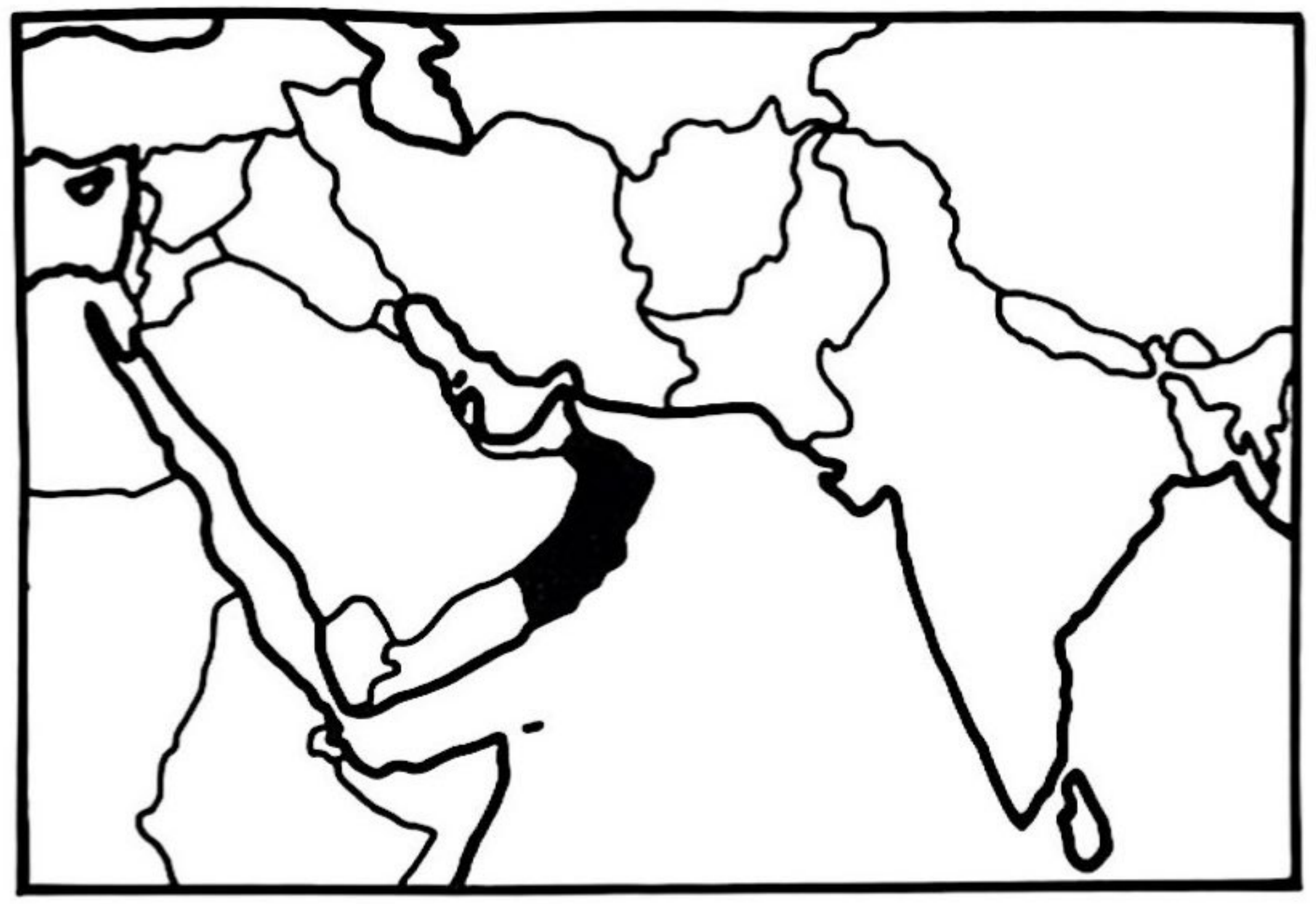
At the beginning of October 1980—when Nigeria marked the 20th year of its independence—Shagari made an official visit to Washington. The leading petroleum producer of Black Africa, Nigeria sells half of its output—some 114 million tons in 1979—to the United States and has become second only to Saudi Arabia as the principal supplier of this commodity to the North American market.

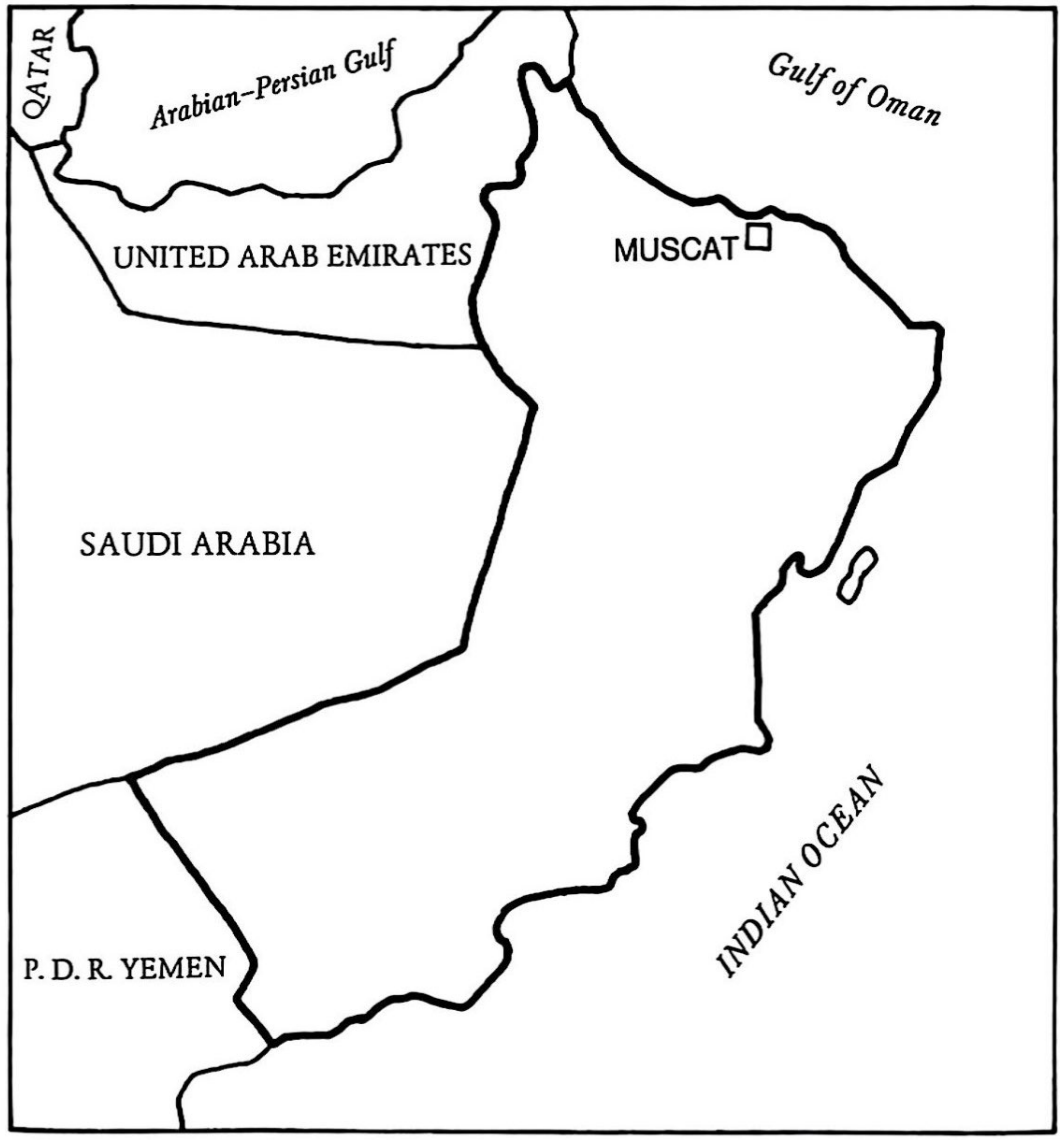
Economy: According to World Bank figures, Nigeria's gross national product grew at the annual rate of 6.2% between 1970 and 1977 (industry in general grew at the rate of 10.3% and manufacturing industry at the rate of 13.4%). In 1977 Nigeria's economic structure appeared as follows: agriculture 34%, industry 43% (manufacturing 9%) and services 23%. According to the "Financial Times", Nigeria's 1979 exports amounted to 16,700,000,000 dollars and imports to 11,800,000,000 dollars. In 1976, the structure of Nigerian exports showed the overwhelming predominance of petroleum in the country's external trade, since, together with other minerals and metals, it accounted for 94% of those exports, while the share of other primary commodities (such agricultural products as cocoa, palm oil, etc.) was 5%, and that of manufactured goods 1%. In 1977 71% of Nigerian exports went to the advanced capitalist states (in particular the United States) and the remaining 29% to the developing countries. In the same year, Nigeria's external public debt stood at 891,000,000 dollars and its foreign-exchange reserves at 4,259,000,000. In 1979 and 1980, Nigeria's gross industrial product rose to some 48,700,000,000 nairas (0.641 naira equalled one dollar in 1979). 10% of the country's petroleum output is used up locally. In 1978, 17% of Nigeria's imports consisted of foodstuffs and 25% of other consumer goods. In 1979, the labour force included 54% of the total population—i.e., some 45 million persons—of whom 56% were employed in agriculture, 17% in industry, and 27% in the services. 50.1% of the foreign investments in Nigeria are British and 29.5% American. 35.1% of these investments are in the petroleum industry, 29.3% in trade, and 24.8% in manufacture (1977 figures). In 1976, 58.85% of the country's enterprises were foreign-owned and 41.5% were Nigerian property (the share in 1970 was 81.2% and 18.8% respectively). Between 1970 and 1977, food prices went up 500% and those of other goods some 200%.

Government: Nigeria is a federal republic made up of 19 states, including the Federal District of Lagos. A new constitution instituted a presidential system of government, with a President, a Vice-President, a Senate of 95 members and a House of Representatives of

499 members on the federal level. The executive and legislative branches of the state governments are governors and state assemblies. The judiciary is theoretically independent.
Armed forces: During the three years of the civil war—from 1967 to 1970—the size of the armed forces grew from 20,000 to 250,000 men. Due to measures taken in 1977, the number of troops was reduced to 150,000, and in October 1980 it was only 120,000. This makes the Nigerian army the third largest in Africa after Egypt and Ethiopia. Special rehabilitation centres for demobilized soldiers have trained 16,000 veterans for agricultural work.
Organizations: The political parties represented in the Nigerian parliament are the ruling National Party of Nigeria, which is in coalition with the Nigerian People's Party, the Unity Party of Nigeria, which is the main opposition party, the People's Redemption Party, which is a leftist grouping, and the Great Nigerian People's Party. There also exists a small Socialist Workers' Party, founded in 1963, and other Marxist groups.
Education: In 1976, 49% of children of primary-school age and 10% of secondary-school age were actually enrolled in classes. In 1975, 1% of the population in the 20- to 24-year age category was enrolled in higher education institutions. 75% of the population are illiterate. Nigeria has 12 universities; the first of them, the University of Ibadan, was established in the western part of the country. There is a great difference in educational level between the former northern and southern regions (eastern and western). The present government has given priority to educational development programmes; under the Obasanjo government, education was second only to defence in the federal budget.
Public health: In 1976 Nigeria had 14,810 doctors and 3,210 nurses. In 1973 its hospital capacity was 39,600 beds.
Religion: According to 1980 figures, 47% of the population are Moslems, 34% are Christians, and 19% practise animist cults.

OMAN





Official name: Sultanate of Oman.

Area: 212,457 sq.km.

Borders: Oman is situated in the extreme south-east of the Arabian Peninsula and its coast extends for more than 1,700 km along the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman. In the north, the tip of the peninsula of Ras Musandam, separated from the rest of the country by the territory of the United Arab Emirates, is situated on the Strait of Hormuz, which dominates entry to the Arabian-Persian Gulf. Oman's land frontiers touch in the north on the United Arab Emirates and in the west on Saudi Arabia and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Population: There has never been a census taken in the history of Oman. Therefore, only estimates are available, which vary from 600,000 to 1,500,000 inhabitants. In 1979 the United Nations estimated the population of Oman to be 864,000, and the annual rate of population growth was estimated at 3.2% in 1980. The majority of the population are ethnic Arabs, although in the north there are sizeable Baluchi and Zadjali minorities, while along the coast there is also strong Hindu influence.

Capital: Muscat (85,000 inhabitants).

Principal cities: Matrah (14,000 inhabitants). In the southern area of Dhofar the main urban community is in the coastal town of Salalah.

Languages: Arabic is the dominant language, but also spoken are the languages of the different ethnic minorities, such as Baluchi, Farsi and Urdu.

Public holidays: December 18, the Sultan's birthday (1940).

Geography: Oman is the second largest country on the Arabian Peninsula. Along its coast lie fertile lowlands known as al-Batinah. From there rises a range of arid hills and a desert plateau some 300 m above the sea level. The highest peak is Debel Adhar (3,170 m).

Other prominent peaks are el Hajar, el Gharbi and Rous el-jebel. Off the coast, the islands of 'Asira, Kurya-Murya, Sir-Abu-Nir, Mus, Yas and other, smaller ones, form part of Omani territory. The climate is extremely hot. The average annual temperature is 27°C, but in the summer season the thermometer rises to 47°C. Only the central plateau enjoys a somewhat more moderate temperature.

Brief history: Since Antiquity, Oman has had a seafaring tradition and has served as a bridge between the outside world and the vast deserts of the interior of the Arabian Peninsula. Since times immemorial, the ports of Muscat and Dhofar have linked the Arab lands with Africa and the Indian subcontinent, although until the 17th century the adjoining seas had been under foreign control.

The seafarers of Antiquity and of Islam of the Middle Ages were followed by Portuguese navigators, who established a naval and commercial base in Muscat in 1508. In 1650 they were driven out by the local tribes, which opposed the Portuguese possession of the area and which gradually took over the Portuguese realm on Africa's eastern coast, including Mombassa and the island of Zanzibar.

It was then that Oman reached its zenith. It was called "The Pearl of Islam" and had a fleet of more than 300 ships, which defeated Portugal's colonial ambitions. After a brief period of Iranian domination, the Al Bu Said dynasty, the ancestors of the present-day Sultan, seized power in Muscat and in 1861 formed separate sultanates to rule the different dominions of Oman. The first one covered Zanzibar and the possessions in East Africa, the second one Muscat and Oman.

Since the majority of Oman's population are Moslems of the Ibadi rite, the custom was observed to elect an Imam as the country's leader. Thus, the founder of the ruling dynasty, chosen in 1744, was Imam Ahmed Ibn Said, who led the campaign which expelled the Portuguese. Throughout the turbulent history of Oman, two important tribal groups, the

Ghafiri and the Hinawi, have staged a number of uprisings against Said authority.

In 1784, the executive and the religious powers of the Imamate were seperated as a result of an internal dispute within the royal family.

The European presence, established in 1821, initiated the custom of bestowing the title of Sultan on the rulers of the coast.

The conflicts between the tribes from the interior of the country and the Sultanate intensified in the course of the 19th century. The influence of the Wahabis, the inhabitants of today's Saudi Arabia, had a profound impact on the crisis which culminated in the sacking of Muscat in 1895. In 1913 the conflict reached its climax when the Ghafiris and Hinawis elected an Imam, Salim Ibn Rashid, who headed the opposition against the Sultan of Oman and Muscat.

British support of the Sultan tipped the balance of power in his favour. Using his influence, the British Agent in Muscat made a group of tribal sheikhs and representatives of the Sultan reach an agreement in 1920, which in substance recognized the Sultan's authority over the whole territory, even though the key dispute about the attributes of the Imamate persisted for several decades.

In 1952 and then again in 1954 and 1957, new clashes occurred, this time provoked by the presence of British petroleum companies, which had obtained concessions from the Imam for prospecting in territories controlled by tribes that did not recognize the 1920 agreement. After a number of clashes in which the Sultan's forces had a military advantage, a true insurrection in the interior of the country, which sought assistance in the Arab world, was stopped by the intervention of the British troops, requested by the Sultan.

In 1958 Oman signed with the United States a treaty governing economic relations. In the same year it ceded to Pakistan the port of Gwadar, together with a surrounding strip of land. In October 1960, at the 15th session of the United Nations General Assembly, the question of Oman was included on the agenda on the proposal of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen. The British representative opposed the independence of Oman, but the Arab countries supported their proposal with irrefutable evidence and received the backing of other member-countries of the United Nations. In fact, Oman was totally subjected to British authority and the Arab world opposed this open interventionism.

At the beginning of the 1960s, the British colonialists stepped up their repression of the religious and nationalist leaders who refused to support the Sultan.

In the meantime, British and American multinational corporations discovered petroleum in Oman and were preparing for its commercial exploitation, which was to begin in 1962.

In those years, the living conditions of the Omani people were a constant topic of debate in the United Nations. It was noted that the living and educational standards of the population were extremely low, but the General Assembly failed to arrive at any decision.

On June 9, 1965, the people of Oman rose up in arms against the feudal regime of Sultan Said Ibn Taimur in the province of Dhofar. Three principal groups formed a Front for the Liberation of Dhofar, which in 1969 converted itself into a Front of Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf.

Since then, large-scale armed struggle developed mainly in the interior of the country and more recently also in the coastal area. Note should be taken in this respect of attacks against the British air base at Salalah in August and September 1969.

The formation of the Front of Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf was a reflection of a process of unification of the other political, anti-colonial and revolutionary forces and organizations in Oman, Muscat, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf areas.

On the other hand, in order to maintain its oil interests, the United States pressed Iran to fill the vacuum left by the British in the area of the Arabian-Persian Gulf. Subsequently, it was disclosed that the Sultanate of Oman had signed a secret defence agreement with the reactionary Iranian monarchy, under which the latter would aid the Sultanate in its anti-guerilla war. On July 23, 1970, with tacit British approval, the Sultan's son deposed his father and sent him to Great Britain, where he died two years later. The young heir had studied at the British military academy at Sandhurst and offered the British the needed alternative to the medieval regime which had been keeping the country extremely backward. The new Sultan placed at the head of a freshly constituted cabinet his uncle Tariq Ibn Taimur, who had been living in exile.

Qabus Ibn Said Ibn Taimur kept the old British military bases in the country and permitted their expansion. Then he used a part of his share of the considerable income from petroleum exploitation—pursued by a British consortium—for the purchase of modern armaments for his army and for employing more British officers. He also trebled the size of his army and formed *firkats*, bands of tribesmen armed by landlords, for fightin the rebels. For its part, Iran met its earlier treaty obligations and sent in fully equipped troops together with helicopter gunships. In the closing months of 1971, an offensive was launched against the guerillas, in which special British troops also took part.

In 1972 the resistance movement adopted the name of the Front for the Liberation of Oman and the Arabian Gulf. At its congress held in 1974, the Front granted organizational independence to groups from the Gulf Emirates and constituted itself as a Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman.

The government has tried to give the impression that the armed movement has been totally liquidated. In 1975 it announced that its troops, with the assistance of Iran, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and officers and special forces from Britain had launched a final offensive against the guerillas in Dhofar.

The Iranian troops, whose presence in the Sultanate had produced great resistance among the countries on the Arabian Peninsula, withdrew in 1977. In the same year, Britain ended her presence on Masira Island, which a few months earlier had been devastated by one of the hurricanes frequent in that area.

In spite of the allegations about the end of the insurrection, military expenditures continue to hold first place in the Sultanate's national budget. In 1978, 878,000,000 dollars were allocated for that purpose. The next year, the instability which continues to mark the country's political life made Sultan Qabus seek Egyptian assistance, and—as announced by the PFLO—Egyptian troops occupied some of the positions abandoned by the Iranians.

The close relations with Egypt are basically due to the fact that Oman is one of the few Arab countries which have voiced their support of the Camp David talks. This political activity and its strategic position at the entry to the Persian Gulf have made Oman an indisputable centre of interest on the part of the United States. In 1980. Oman admitted that negotiations were under way to permit the use of its naval and air facilities by United States forces, which have greatly increased their presence in the surrounding seas.

The negotiations seem to centre on the use of the Masira base, although there have also been reports on the improvement of the Seeb airfield for military purposes and on the reconstruction of a large base—allegedly for the Omani navy—located on the Batrin coast north of Muscat.

Also reported in 1980, was the sale to Oman of 140,000,000 dollars worth of British military equipment and the granting by Washington of more than 1,000,000,000 dollars of credit for purchases of arms and military technology.

Economy: In the past decade, Oman's economy has been dominated by petroleum production. Commercial exploitation of petroleum began in 1967 at the daily rate of 200,000 barrels, which steadily rose in the subsequent years. In 1977. petroleum accounted for 93% of the country's income. Estimates of the existing reserves vary considerably, but reports from different sources tend to agree that they will be exhausted within 20 years at the 1977 pace of exploitation, i.e., 319,000 barrels a day.

In 1980 Oman produced 200,000 metric tons of petroleum, which is 1.5% of the total petroleum production of the Middle East. In 1981, some 81,000,000 dollars are to be invested in improvement of secondary extraction techniques which, according to experts, have involved high relative costs.

The Shell Company owns 34% of the shares of the Petroleum Development Oman Corporation (PDOC), in which also the French hold certain interests. The principal buyers of Omani petroleum have been in recent years Japan, Switzerland and Norway.

Oman also has reserves of natural gas which are being exploited at present at the rate of 50,000 cu. feet daily. Gas liquefaction plants are being built in the Yibal and Saih Rawal fields.

Oman possesses substantial resources of other minerals, although most of them are located in remote areas with difficult access. The most important among these resources is copper, but there are also manganese, iron, zinc, chromium, phosphate, hard coal, gold, silver and nickel. An agreement was signed in 1978 with the Marshall Exploration Company of Texas on the exploitation of copper ore. A copper-refining plant is under construction in Sohar, in which Saudi Arabia has a financial interest.

Nevertheless, the traditional farming and fishing activities still provide a living for 80% of the economically active population. However, low productivity of labour necessitates imports of food. In 1977 agriculture's share of the GNP was 2.7%. Some 40,000 hectares of land are being cultivated, of which one-third are date-palm plantations. Other crops include alfalfa, limes, mangoes, bananas, onions, tomatoes and wheat.

There is practically no industry. In 1977 its share of the GNP was merely 0.9%. A pilot project of major importance is the construction of an industrial zone at Rusail, north of the Seeb airport. Industrial investments—except for the petroleum sector—go basically into the construction of cement mills and production of cement.

Oman's transportation network has undergone great expansion in the past ten years. In 1979. there were 1,447 km of paved and 10,509 km of other roads. In that year, too, a highway linking Dubai and Oman was completed.

A five-year plan, launched in 1976, provided for the annual growth of the GNP at the rate of 3.1%. With substantial economic aid from Saudi Arabia, its implementation and investments concentrated on transportation (24%), the building industry (19%), the petroleum and mining industries (17%) and social services (14%).

Figures relating to commerce are not reliable since there are no official statistics but merely estimates relating to individual products and ports. However, there seems to be in general a favourable balance of payments, which was estimated at 141,000,000 dollars in 1977. Oman's foreign exchange reserves stood at some 577,000,000 dollars in 1979.

The 1980 national budget was 2,870,000,000 dollars. Income from petroleum exports accounted for 2,719,000,000 dollars on the receipt side.

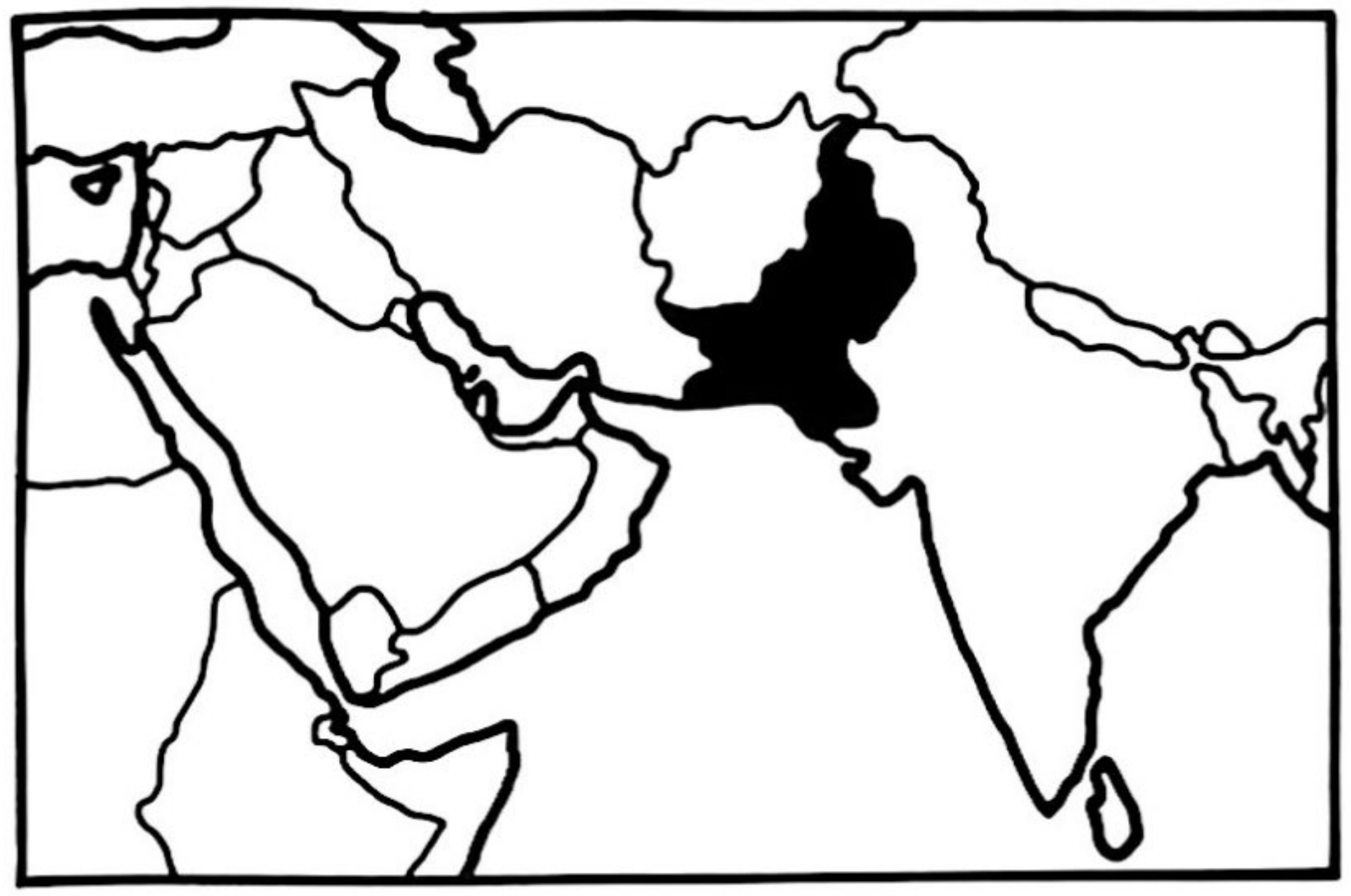
Per capita income in 1978 was 2,517 dollars.

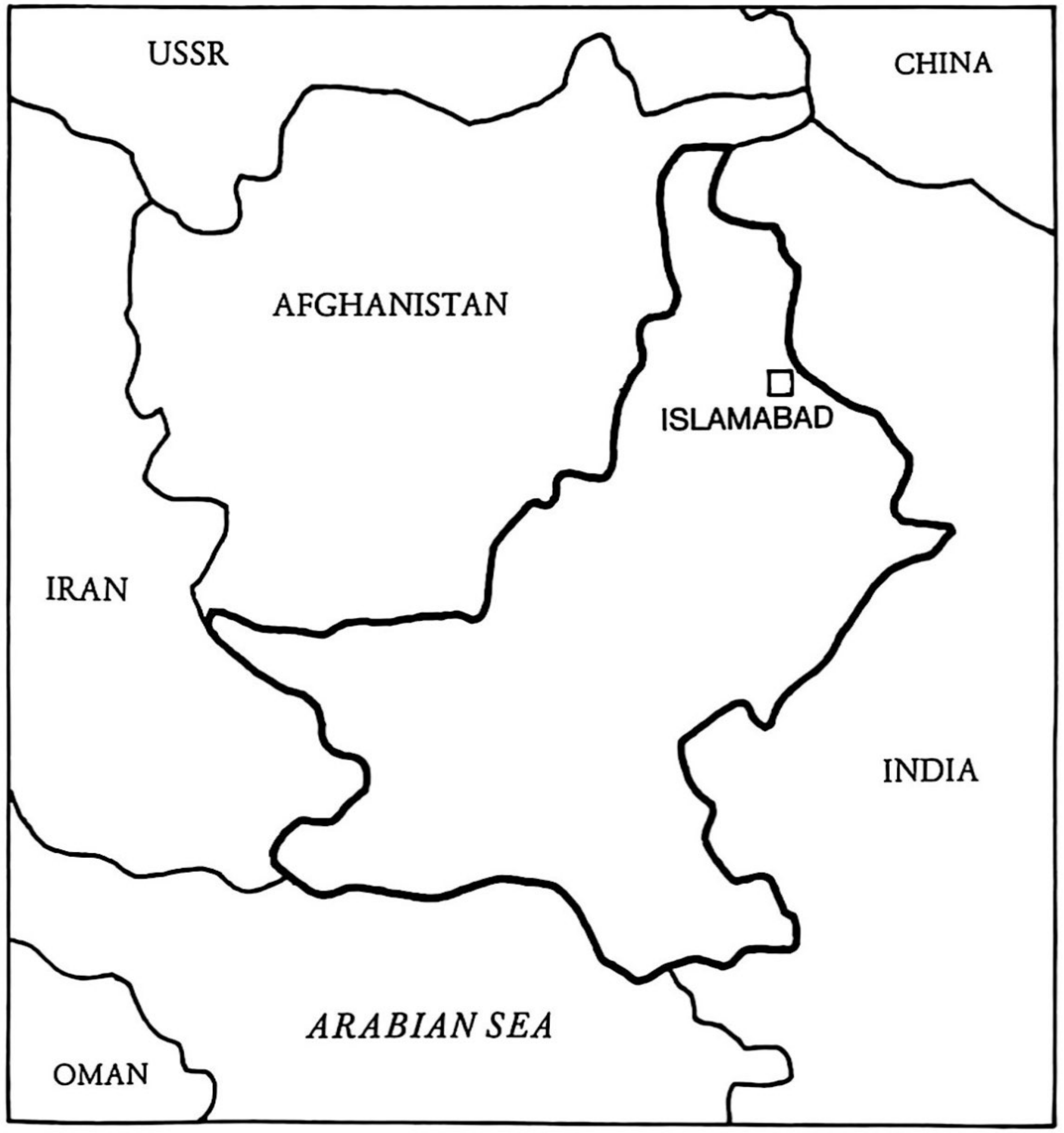
The national currency is the Omani rial, whose rate of exchange in 1980 was 0.34 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The Sultanate of Oman has no constitution and the Sultan wields absolute power. In 1970 Sultan Qabus constituted a government to help him run the country, in

which he retained for himself the portfolios of defence and finance. The country's social structure has strong tribal features with the tribal chiefs being subordinated to the Sultan.
Organizations: At present there are no political parties in Oman and the regime abolished the People's Councils which the rebels had set up prior to 1975. The government has also prevented the establishment of real trade unions. In March 1979, the first-ever meeting of Omani women took place. They had been traditionally kept out of all public life. The principal topic discussed was the emancipation of women, whose rights are greatly restricted by the orthodox Islamic practices prevailing in the country.
Education: Oman has undergone major transformation in the educational sphere. In 1970 there were only three schools in the whole country in view of the former Sultan's total opposition to education. In 1978 there were 310 schools with 76,000 pupils in addition to four vocational schools. There is no university, and illiteracy among the adult population continues to be one of the highest in the Arab world. Some 26,000,000 rials were spent on education in the period 1976-80.
Public health: Generally speaking, there were no doctors in Oman prior to September 1971, and there were only 12 beds in a small hospital. Infant mortality is one of the highest in the world. Tuberculosis, malaria, parasitic and other diseases due to lack of sanitation and to malnutrition continue to plague the people of Oman. In 1978 there were 13 hospitals, 30 clinics and 50 dispensaries with a total of 1,600 beds, served by more than 120 doctors and some 135 nurses. Only 12% of the hospital staff are indigenous.
Religion: Islam is the official and the only religion in Oman. The Omani Moslems are mostly adherents of the Ibadi sect, but 25% of the population are Sunni Moslems.

PAKISTAN





Official name: The Islamic Republic of Pakistan.
Area: 803,940 sq.km. This does not include the Pakistani part of the territory of Jammu and Kashmir (83,807 sq.km).
Borders: In the east and south-east Pakistan has a common frontier with India, in the north-west with Afghanistan, in the west with Iran, and in the north with the People's Republic of China.
Population: 75,620,000 inhabitants in 1978. The annual rate of population growth is 2.5%
Capital: Islamabad (500,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Karachi, Lahore, Rawalpindi.
Languages: Urdu is the official language. English, Punjabi, Baluchi and other languages are also spoken.
Public holidays: March 23, Proclamation of the Republic; August 14 Independence Day.
Geography: Pakistan lies in the extreme north-west of the geographic entity known as the Indian subcontinent and in the westernmost part of the alluvial plain of the Rivers Indus and Ganges, which is bordered in the north by the Himalya range.

The north of the country is mountainous with very high elevations. The west, which is known as Baluchistan, is an extension of the Iranian plateau, semi-arid and hilly, and separated from the eastern part of the country by the basin of the 1,600 km-long Indus River, which has its source in the northern mountain ranges and empties into the Arabian Sea. The eastern part of Pakistan includes a section of the Thar Desert, which continues into India. The extreme south of Pakistan, known as the Sind, adjoins the Arabian Sea and forms the basin of the Indus River, whose current greatly gains in volume with the waters of five large rivers (the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Bias, the Ravi and the Sutlej), which join with the Indus in the Punjab. The Indus basin is Pakistan's most fertile area.

The climate is hot and dry with a median temperature of 27°C, except in the northern mountains, whose peaks are covered with snow and ice the year round.

Brief history: The fertile land of the Indus Valley had been the home of flourishing civilizations since very ancient times, of whose existence we know from archaeology but of whose political and social organization we still know very little.

Over the centuries, different peoples and armies passed through this area on their way to India. In the 8th century A.D. the Arabs arrived, imposing Islam on the local population, while in their sweeping advance the Mongols established over these lands their political and military domination, but absorbed the already prevalent religion.

The arrival of the British from India in the 18th century marked the beginning of the colonization process which would last almost two hundred years and which tied the destiny of this area and its people to the rest of the Indian subcontinent from which it had been relatively separated by geography and communications.

The history of the years which followed is the same as that of the other peoples inhabiting the subcontinent. The struggle against foreign political, economic and cultural domination made the people try to revive their national values, religion included. This phenomenon was cleverly used by the British, who encouraged the hostility and fighting between individual religious groups, favouring one or another group according to the situation in order to weaken in this way the struggle for national liberation and to prevent united action.

When the mostly Hindu National Congress Party was founded, it was followed by the Moslem League in 1906, which came into being as the culmination of a campaign of revival of Moslem community sentiments in order to assume the defence of the interests of the Moslem population against colonial domination.

The idea of creating a separate state for the Moslems of the Indian subcontinent was conceived and promoted by the poet and philosopher Mohamed Iqbal in 1930 and was incorporated in the programme of the Moslem League in 1940.

However, this idea was not accepted by the Congress Party until 1947, when it became evident after many violent and bloody clashes between Moslems and Hindus, that Great Britain favoured the concept and was not disposed to accept the emergence of a United India.

Thus, Pakistan came into being as a state on August 14, 1947, made up of areas where the majority of the population professed Islam and which were situated in the north-west and north-east of the subcontinent.

As a result of this division, which did not take into account either geographical or economic factors, the new state included such areas as East Bengal, separated from the western part of Pakistan by thousands of kilometres and by very distinct ethnic language, cultural and other differences. The formation of two states on the Indian subcontinent, one mostly Moslem, the other Hindu, produced a massive migration in both directions across the new frontier. This migration had no historical precedent and aggravated the difficult economic situation inherited by both states from the colonial period and from the arbitrary partition.

The process of economic and social re-adjustment had barely begun, when a conflict erupted in the state of Kashmir (which had a Moslem population but whose ruler opted for union with India). This evolved into the first war between Pakistan and India and resulted in the division of Kashmir between the two states, a situation that has not been definitely settled to this day.

Pakistan's foreign policy was largely a reflection of its rivalry with India, for which reason it also found itself quickly aligned with the capitalist powers during the period of the cold war. Pakistan became a member of the SEATO and CENTO pacts and permitted the establishment of United States military bases on its territory, directed against the Soviet Union and China. Economically, this orientation of Pakistan's foreign policy was expressed in a positive approach to foreign investments and to "assistance" by international capital.

Domestically, these factors found their projection in a steady growth of military expenditures and militarism, as well as in increased political instability. The Moslem League became a minority political party representing the country's leading circles. The other political parties which had emerged generally represented other special interests and were engaged in a sterile inter-party struggle.

In 1956 Pakistan decided to transform itself into an Islamic Republic and to end its status of a British Dominion, although retaining its membership in the British Commonwealth.

Two years later a coup brought to power General Mohamed Ayub Khan and did away with the parliamentary system. After having established strict military control over the country and after having suspended political party activities, Ayub Khan legitimized his position by making himself President through a plebiscite and by promulgating a constitution providing for a presidential-type system of government.

Peking's increasingly anti-Soviet position and China's aggression against India promoted a rapprochement between the governments in Islamabad and Peking, which developed into economic and military co-operation between them.

1965 produced a second armed conflict between Pakistan and India over Kashmir, which ended after negotiations between the two belligerents held in Tashkent under the auspices of the Soviet Union.

Three years later, serious disturbances broke out in Pakistan, mainly in East Bengal, in protest against the government of Ayub Khan and the continuous represssion, which finally forced the resignation of Ayub Khan in favour of General Agha Muhammad Yahya Khan.

Responding to public pressure, the new government held elections for a Constituent Assembly in December 1970, in which the Awami League won an overwhelming majority in East Bengal, while in West Pakistan the majority of seats was won by the Pakistan People's Party led by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Faced by the election results which gave the Awami League a majority in the Constituent Assembly, the Yahya Khan government postponed the session of the Assembly and entered into negotiations with the League's leader, Mujibur Rahman, who demanded autonomy for East Bengal. The refusal by Pakistan's rulers to meet this demand provoked a break in the negotiations in March 1971. The government in Islamabad immediately dispatched troops to East Bengal and instituted brutal repression, to which the Awami League responded with the proclamation of the People's Republic of Bangladesh and with armed struggle.

The intensity of the repressive measures instituted by Islamabad was such that millions of people fled from Bangladesh to seek refuge in India, thereby creating a difficult situation in the Indian states adjoining Bangladesh, Bengal in particular.

In December, India officially recognized the government of Bangaldesh. Pakistan's response was a declaration of war. This conflict—the third one between the two countries since their independence in 1947—lasted barely two weeks and concluded with a rout of the Pakistani army and with the independence of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

The internal crisis provoked by these events forced General Yahya Khan to resign. He was replaced by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the leader of the Pakistan People's Party, who assumed the presidential office. Internally, Bhutto launched a relatively progressive policy, while in his foreign policy he adopted a course of normalization of relations with India and Bangladesh, but at the same time he strengthened Pakistan's ties with Peking.

In retaliation for the British recognition of the Bangladesh government, Bhutto decided to withdraw Pakistan from the Commonwealth. On the other hand, he kept his country in SEATO and pursued an active foreign policy aimed at tying Pakistan to other Islamic countries. He also took the necessary steps for launching an ambitious programme of nuclear power production with French assistance, which provoked Indian protests and serious friction with the United States.

After long negotiations, Pakistan finally recognized Bangladesh in 1974.

At home, Bhutto proposed the adoption of a new constitution, whereupon the right-wing and left-wing opposition parties formed a United Democratic Front to demand amendments of the draft constitution, which would reduce the authority the proposed constitutional provisions granted to the Prime Minister and the Central Government.

The constitution proposed by Bhutto entered into effect with the amendments in August 1973, and Bhutto himself became Prime Minister.

A rise in seccessionist trends among different ethnic minorities inspired by the Bengalis' example, together with the growing discontent of the big bourgeoisie affected by the nationalization of some industries, and the opposition of political groups differing with Bhutto, all produced a tense political climate.

It was in this situation that the Prime Minister called parliamentary elections in 1977, in which his Pakistan People's Party won 85% of the parliamentary seats. This election provoked violent protests by the opposition, which accused the government of having falsified them. The government's repression of these protests resulted in casualties of more than 300 dead and 5,000 wounded.

Making use of this atmosphere of instability and repression, the military decided to take over the reins of government once again, and on July 5, 1977, organized a coup which brought to power General Zia Ul-Haq. Bhutto was arrested, tried and sentenced to death by a military tribunal on charges of abuse of power. The sentence was carried out in April 1978.

The government of General Zia Ul-Haq, which suspended the activity of the political parties, imposed press censorship and decreed martial law, has made several attempts to legitimize its position by elections but these have never materialized.

At the beginning of 1979 Pakistan left the CENTO pact, thereby cutting its last ties with aggressive military pacts, whereby it met the conditions for joining the non-aligned movement, which it did at the Sixth Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries held in Havana in September of the same year.

Under the leadership of General Zia Ul-Haq, Pakistan has tightened its relations with China and has deepened its hostile attitude towards India. It has also been providing political and material assistance to the feudal elements from Afghanistan, who have found safe refuge and logistical support on Pakistani territory for their armed attacks against the revolutionary government in Kabul. This policy towards the revolutionary Afghan government earned the Zia Ul-Haq government the restoration of Washington's economic and military aid in 1980 after its suspension in April 1979 because of Pakistan's nuclear programme.

The Haq government has also continued the Bhutto policy of seeking the leadership of the Islamic countries, as well as their financial assistance.

Economy: Agriculture is the main sector of Pakistan's economy. It employs more than 50% of the labour force, which was estimated at 22,867,000 in January 1980, and accounts for 30% of the GNP. Wheat, rice, sugar cane and cotton are the principal crops, the first two providing approximately half the country's export earnings.

Pakistan possesses large mineral resources, but they are not yet exploited. Major copper-ore deposits were discovered in Baluchistan in 1979, as were considerable coal deposits in Lakhra.

The main agricultural products in the 1978-1979 season were 3,220,000 long tons of rice, 9,787,500 tons of wheat, 26,985,200 tons of sugar cane, and 2,670,000 bales of cotton.

Livestock statistics for 1978 show 14,946,000 head of cattle, 11,069,000 buffaloes, 22,291,000 sheep, 25,597,000 goats, and 42,144,000 poultry. In the same year Pakistan produced 167,000 tons of beef, 170,000 tons of buffalo meat, 115,000 tons of mutton, 151,000 tons of goat meat, and 34,000 tons of poultry. The 1977 fish catch was 192,000 tons.

The mining industry produced in the period 1978-1978 3,699,504 tons of limestone, 428,877 tons of mineral salts, 1,196,000 tons of coal and lignite, 3,529,999 barrels of crude oil, and 5,834,000,000 cu. m of natural gas.

The processing industry turned out in the same period 320,843 metric tons of cotton fibre, 607,000 tons of sugar, 3,022,000 tons of cement, 620,000 tons of urea, 97,800 tons of superphosphate, 97,000 tons of ammonia-sulphate, 56,400 tons of sulphuric acid, 71,300 tons of soda, and 35,900 tons of caustic soda.

The 1978-1979 balance of trade showed a deficit of 19,463,100,000 Pakistani rupees—the national currency—due to 36,388,100,000 rupees worth of imports and 16,925,000,000 rupees worth of exports. Pakistan's principal commercial partners in that year were West Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Great Britain, and the United States.

Pakistan's principal foreign-exchange earner is rice. Another important source of foreign exchange are remittances of Pakistanis working abroad, who sent their families in 1978-1979 the total equivalent of 17,078,000,000 rupees.

The 1978-1979 national budget provided for income of 32,220,000,000 rupees and expenditures of 34,174,000,000 rupees. In that same year, 19,021,700,000 rupees were earmarked for economic development projects. The Fifth Five-Year Plan, covering the period 1978-1983, calls for expenditures of 210,000,000,000 rupees on development, of which 80,000,000,000 are to come from foreign sources. Pakistan's GNP in the fiscal year 1978-1979 amounted to 191,584,000,000 rupees.

In December 1979, the Asian Development Bank granted 14,100,000 dollars to Pakistan. A group of advanced capitalist countries providing financial assistance to Pakistan supplied it with 750,000,000 dollars for the fiscal year 1979-1980, of which sum 128,000,000 was provided by Japan and 75,000,000 by Great Britain. This financial aid was expected to rise to 980,000,000 dollars in the year 1980-1981.

Government: A Martial Law Administration was established in July 1977, when the 1973 constitution was suspended. That constitution established a bicameral federal legislature, including a 216-member National Assembly, and the office of Prime Minister, who was elected by the Assembly. The constitution was suspended until new elections and the formation of a new government. The Martial Law Administration consists of a President, a Cabinet of 20 members, headed by a Chief Martial Law Administrator, and a four-man Military Council. Pakistan is divided into four provinces, each having an appointed governor and a provincial government. There is also the special area of the capital of Islamabad and tribal areas administered by the central government.

Armed forces: In 1979, Pakistan's armed forces totalled 429,000 men, of whom 12,000 served in the navy and 17,000 in the air force. The 79-80 military budget was 11,743,000,000 rupees.

Organizations: There are many political parties in Pakistan, but their activity is currently banned. The Pakistan People's Party, founded by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1967, enjoys the greatest popular support and is now led by Bhutto's widow and daughter. Besides the Moslem League, the oldest political organization in the country, there is also the Communist Party of Pakistan, founded in 1948, the Socialist Party, the Democratic Party, the National Alliance, the National Democratic Front and others.

The main trade union organizations are the National Pakistani Trade Union Federation, founded in 1962 and associating 270 unions, the Pakistani Trade Union Federation with 300 affiliated unions and affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the Pakistani Workers' Federation with 500 affiliated unions.

Education: Free and universal primary education is guaranteed by the constitution, but less than half of the children in the respective age range receive it.

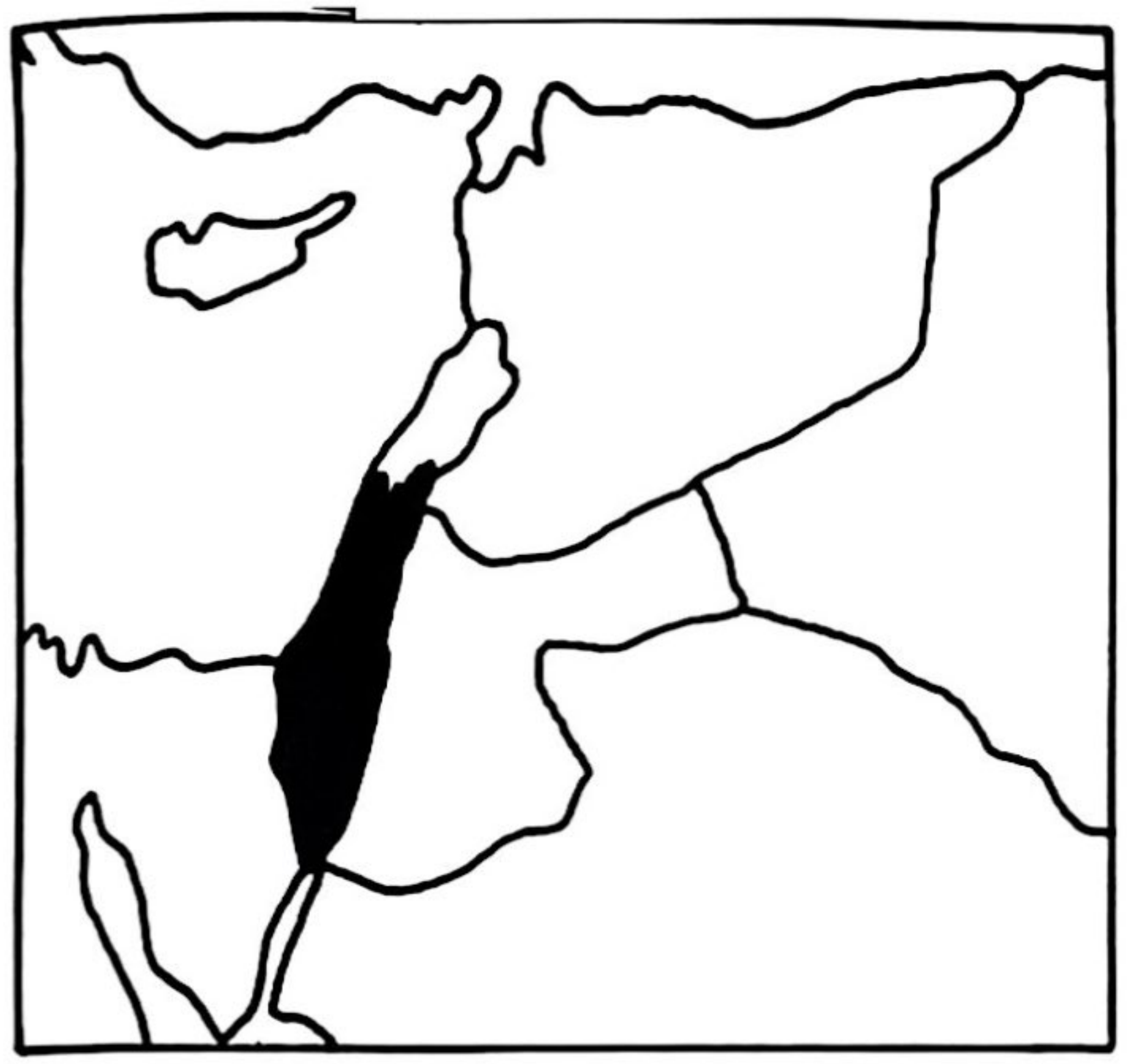
In the school term 1977-1978 there were 6,170,000 pupils attending primary schools and 1,856,000 students at secondary schools with 148,059 and 120,186 teachers respectively.

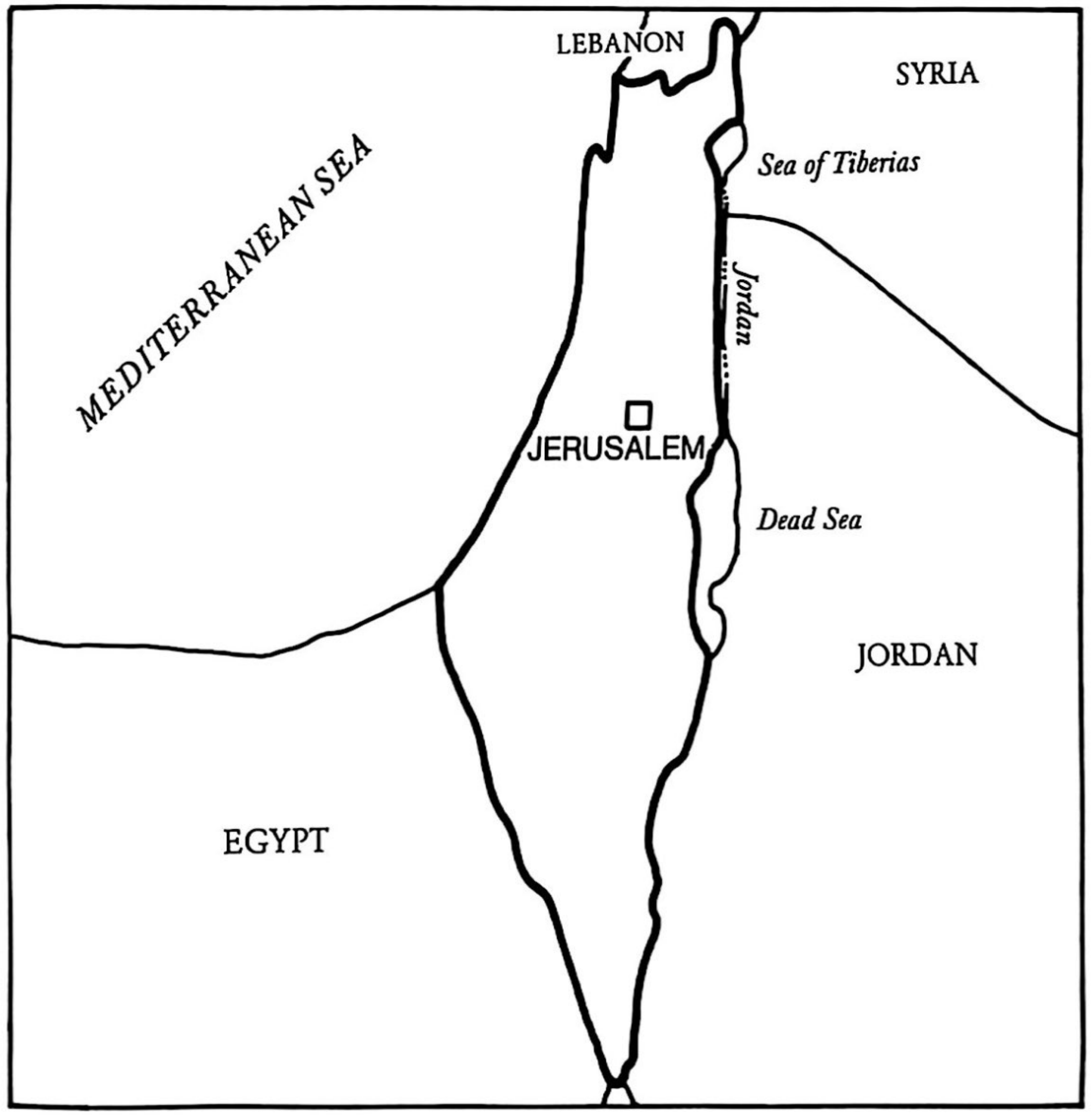
Higher education was provided for 376,000 students by 18,129 teachers. There are 15 universities in the country. In 1979 illiteracy affected 77% of the adult population. In 1978, 112 periodicals and 355 weeklies and biweeklies were published. There are 12 radio stations and one television station, which began broadcasting in colour in 1980. There are 1,540,000 radio receivers and 545,878 television sets in Pakistan, according to the latest available statistics.

Public health: In 1979 there were more than 3,500 hospitals in Pakistan with the total of 39,512 beds and 19,922 doctors.

Religion: The great majority of the population (97%) are Moslems of the Sunni sect, although there are also some 20 to 25,000,000 Shiites. Hindus account for 1.6% of the population, and there is a small Christian minority.

PALESTINE





Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

Name: Palestine.

Area: 34,000 sq.km (historical Palestine).

Borders: In the north, Palestine borders on Lebanon, in the east on the desert and semi-arid plains of Syria, in the south on the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula, and in the west is the Mediterranean Sea.

Population: According to figures published in March 1981 by the National Palestinian Fund, the Palestinian people number 4,390,00 of whom 530,600 live in the territories occupied by Israel since 1948, 813,000 live on the West Bank, occupied since 1967; 476,000 live in the Gaza Strip, which has also been under Israeli occupation since 1967; 1,300,000 live in Jordan; 348,000 in Lebanon, 276,000 in Kuwait, and the rest in different Arab countries, Europe and other parts of the world.

Historical capital: Jerusalem.

Principal towns: Nablus, Haifa, Gaza, Hebron (or Khalil), Nazareth.

Language: Arabic.

Geography: Historical Palestine is situated in Asia Minor on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea and covers a territory which today contains Israel, Syria, Lebanon and Jordan.

This territory is a part of the great Syrian and Arabian plateau, which originally sloped uniformly towards the Mediterranean Sea but in the Tertiary Period was affected by major upheavals that broke it up and created a deep rift running through the country from the north to the south. The rift is its principal geological feature. At the bottom of this rift flow the Jordan River and the Wadi el Arab.

The territory may now be divided into three almost parallel geographical zones—a coastal plain, a strip of highlands, and the deep tectonic depression through which flows the Jordan River and which is filled in its greater part by the Dead Sea.

The coastal plain varies from six to 20 km in width. Prickly-pear cactus abounds in it and there are many swamps fed by rivulets flowing down from the highlands. The coastline forms a fine bay known as Haifa.

Rising from the highlands is Mt. Tabor. The West Bank highlands are hilly, especially in the north, where the highest peak, Jebel Jermak, rises to 1,200 m and Jebel el Arus to 1,073 m, both northwest of Lake Tiberias.

The West Bank highlands slope down to the south, a region with many denuded rocks, all the way to the desert of Judaea. South of Hebron the highlands steeply drop to the Negev Desert.

The climate of this region is subtropical and is characterized by scarce rainfall, especially in the interior, and by rather high temperatures. The summers are extended and hot, while the winters, mild along the coast, are more severe in the interior, where the climate assumes a continental character.

The absence of sufficient rainfall is due to the proximity of the desert. For this reason, deep wells are drilled in the north and the centre of the region to supply water for farming. In addition, there have existed since Antiquity systems of canals and irrigation works for water storage.

With the exception of the Jordan River, there are few water streams and even these tend to dry up during the summer. There are three major lakes: Lake Merom in the north, which is now dry, Lake Tiberias, also in the north, and the Dead Sea.

The formation of the state of Israel in 1948 produced many changes in ancient Palestine, not only geographical but also social, economic and political, as a result of the purposeful Zionist policy of provoking—among other objectives—forced emigration of the Arab inhabitants.

Brief history: The territory of historical Palestine has been inhabited since the earliest days of humanity. It is believed that the first settlements were established by such peoples as the Amoreans, the Canaanites and the Aramaeans, who came from the interior of the Arabian Peninsula.

Of these peoples, the Semetic Canaanites moved, around 3500 B.C., from the interior of the peninsula to the present Egypt, Iraw, Syria and Lebanon, and one of thir migratory waves settled down in Palestine around 2500 B.C.

Their kingdom reached its zenith some five centuries later.

Between the 14th and the 13th centuries B.C., Hebrew tribes from the south of the Chaldean realm moved to different parts of the Near East and settled down in one of these areas, Egypt.

Around 1250 B.C., they migrated across the Sinai Peninsula to the area east of the Dead Sea and subsequently conquered the original state of Canaan, occupying a part of historical Palestine and some territory west of the Jordan River.

The Hebrew kingdom of Saul is believed to have been founded around 1020 B.C. His successors, David and Solomon, upheld the unity of their dominions until 923 B.C. A large part of the original Palestinian population continued to live in their land even under Hebrew rule and the latter learned from them how to farm and how to live in towns.

Under King Soloman's rule the Hebrew kingdom split in 923 B.C. into the Kingdom of Israel in the north and the Kingdom of Judaea in the south. In 722 B.C., the Assyrians, in one of their expansionist waves, conquered the northern kingdom, while the Babylonians, led by Nabukhadnezar, took Judaea in 586 B.C. and deported most of its inhabitants to Babylon. Thus ended Hebrew rule in a part of historical Palestine.

The history of successive conquests of these lands continued with a Persian invasion in 538 B.C., then came the Greeks under Alexander the Great in 331 B.C., then the Romans in 64 B.C., and their rule was followed by the Byzantines in 324 A.D.

In 636 A.D. began the Islamic expanison which burst out of the Arabian Peninsula and rapidly engulfed Palestine, giving its population a cultural and religious unity that was maintained over the subsequent centuries.

More than 50 years after the beginning of the process of converting Palestine to Islam the Crusaders came, occupied Jerusalem in 1099 and established a Kingdom of Jerusalem in a part of the area. It lasted until 1187, when Saladin al Ayubi conquered the city and defeated the European invaders.

The next foreign conquest came in 1516, when the Turks under Sultan Selim I opened a long period of Ottoman rule, which lasted four centuries until 1917.

After World War I the Supreme Council of the Peace Conference decided not to return Turkey its Arab territories, including Palestine, which had been occupied by the Allied powers in the course of the war. This decision led to the application of the Sykes-Picot Pact of 1916, under which France and Great Britain had agreed on the partition of the Ottoman Empire between themselves. subsequently, in 1917, the already strong international Zionist movement, which called for the creation of a Jewish nation, obtained from Great Britain the Balfour Declaration, which obligated the British Crown to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine.

The British mandate in Palestine was established in 1920 in spite of opposition by the native population. At that time the Jewish community in Palestine—some 58,000 people—represented a mere 8% of the population.

The first Arab protest demonstration against this jugglery with the Palestinians' national rights took place in April 1920 and was followed by others in 1921, 1922 and 1929, the last one beginning in August and lasting several weeks. A rebellion broke out in 1936 and did not end until 1939. The Palestinians demanded primarily an immediate stop to Jewish immigration, a prohibition of transfer of Arab lands to the Jews, and the establishment of a democratic government. All these demands were turned down by the British. On the contrary, the British authorities severely suppressed the Arab nationalist aspirations, and it is estimated that more than 50,000 Palestinian Arabs perished during that period.

Beginning in the early 1940s, the Jews already settled in Palestine launched their terrorist activities against the Arabs and the British. This situation made Great Britain ask the Secretary-General of the United Nations in April 1947 for consideration of the question of Palestine. The General Assembly appointed a special commission to investigate that situation, and the commission recommended the partition of the country. According to British records, which, of course, did not include illegal immigration, the number of Jews settled in Palestine had by then risen to 700,000 or, approximately 33% of the population.

The U.N. resolution recommending partition provided for the division of Palestine into three main regions: the centre, which represented 56% of the total area of Palestine, was to become the Jewish state and the rest the Palestinian state; Jerusalem and its vicinity were to become an "international zone" under U.N. administration. In this way, the Jewish sector was to have an area of 14,942 sq.km, the Arab sector 11,203 sq.km, and the international zone of Jerusalem 177 sq.km.

On November 29, 1947, the U.N. General Assembly passed the plan for the partition of Palestine by 33 votes in favour, 13 against, and 10 abstentions.

Since that moment, the Zionist movement, which for many years had been hostile to and molested the Arab population and actively conspired to bring in illegal Jewish immigrants, stepped up its terrorist activities against the Arabs with the aim of forcing them to leave and thereby expanding the territory of the proposed Jewish state. The founding of Israel was proclaimed on May 14, 1948, and the very next day began the first Arab-Israeli war in Palestine, which made mockery of the original decision of the United Nations.

The armistice agreements signed by the Zionist state with Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan and Syria enabled the Israelis to expand the area under their control to some 80% of the territory of Palestine. Ever since then, the Palestinians have been unceasingly striving to recover their lands occupied by Israel and to preserve their physical integrity and their way of life in the face of the laws and arbitrary regulations imposed by the Israelis in the Arab areas.

The action which led to the proclamation of the state of Israel in 1948 produced a division of Palestine into three parts: the part occupied by Israel, which extended to cover 20,673 sq.km, the western bank of the Jordan River, annexed by Jordan and covering 5,295 sq.km, and the Gaza strip under Egyptian control and covering 354 sq.km. More than 700,000 Palestinians were driven from their homes and land to the neighbouring countries marking the beginning of the forced exile of an entire people, which continues to this day and which was made even more acute by the subsequent Israeli aggression and continued expansion.

The stepped-up Israeli aggression against the Arabs, which claimed a large number of victims in the years to follow, and other forms of opposition to the genocide committed by the Zionists were the factors behind the constitution of a militant Palestinian organization—Al Fatah—in February 1957 by Yasser Arafat, an engineer by profession, whose *nom de guerre* is Abu Amar.

Some years later, in January 1964, the Arab countries meeting in Cairo approved the formation of a Palestinian resistance organization. A General Palestinian Congress was then held in Jerusalem from May 31 to June 2, which drew up a National Charter. That document stipulates that Palestine is the homeland of the Palestinian Arab people who have the legitimate right to return to their country. The congress also founded the Palestine Liberation Organization—the PLO.

On January 1, 1965, *Al Assifa,* the military wing of Al Fatah, carried out its first armed action against Israel. Later in the month, on January 28, this organization issued its first political manifesto, in which it declared that armed struggle was the only way whereby the Palestinians could return to their homeland.

At the beginning the PLO had as its chairman Ahmed Shukairi who was pro-Saudi and who was replaced by the leader of Al Fatah, Yasser Arafat, in February 1969. In keeping with the National Charter, the PLO wants to establish a democratic and lay Palestinian state on the territory of Palestine, where Christians, Jews and Moslems would co-exist in peace. It also believes that armed struggle is the only way in which Palestine can be liberated, and defines Zionism as a political movement organically tied to imperialism and opposed to any national liberation activities and to all progressive movements in the world, due to its racist, fanatic, aggressive, expansionist and colonial nature.

In 1968, the National Charter was amended to the effect that any liberated part of historical Palestine should become a base for the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Since 1965, when Palestinian armed action was initiated, this form of struggle against the Israeli occupation of the Arab territories in Palestine spread within the Palestinian resistance movement represented in the PLO. In that year, 165 operations were carried out on the occupied territories and their number continued to grow in the subsequent years. In 1970 they totalled 2,265 and were carried out by different armed Palestinian organizations.

The most important among these clashes demonstrating the combat readiness of a people forced into exile were the battle of Karameh on March 21, 1968, the battles of Arkud, in 1972, the defence against Israeli invasions of the southern coast of Lebanon in 1978 with the objective of destroying the Palestine resistance movement in that area.

Palestinian forces also took part in the wars that other Arab countries waged against Israeli aggression after 1948. These aggressive wars by Israel against the Arab peoples since 1948 included the invasion of Egypt jointly with France and Great Britain in 1956, motivated by the nationalization of the Suez Canal, the war of 1967, when Israel expanded its domination to the territories of Gaza, the West Bank and the Golan Heights belonging to Syria, as well as to the greater part of Egypt's Sinai Peninsula, the fourth war waged in 1973 and the invasion of southern Lebanon in 1978.

In the occupied West Bank Israel's occupation policy has essentially involved a systematic expulsion of the Arab inhabitants of that area and the establishment there of Jewish settlements. This form of gradual domination, practised since 1948 on the territories occupied by force in historical Palestine, has forced into exile hundreds of thousands of their Arab inhabitants, who have settled in the neighbouring countries and who constitute what amounts to an entire nation in exile.

According to figures published by the United Nations Refugee Welfare Agency—UNRWA—the 61 camps this agency administers in Jordan, Gaza, the West Bank, Syria and Lebanon house some 680,000 registered Palestinian refugees, which is only a fraction of the actual number of Palestinians forced to leave their country by Israeli expansionism.

Inside the territory occupied by Israel in 1948 the Arab inhabitants are exposed not only to economic exploitation but also to cultural discrimination. According to official figures, barely 20% of the pupils and students attending schools on that territory are of Arab origin.

On the occupied territory of the West Bank more than 150 Jewish settlements have been established in the somewhat more than a decade of occupation—either by the expulsion of the original Arab inhabitants or by such location of these settlements, which progressively changes the original demographic make-up of the country. Under the government of Menachem Begin alone, some 20,000 Arab-owned houses have been blown up as part of Israel's repressive measures in retaliation for the Palestinian resistance and as part of the Israeli policy of colonization. Some 4,000 Palestinians are imprisoned in Israeli jails for their political activity.

It is estimated in general that the total number of Palestinians in exile exceeds 4,390,000 people, most of them living in Jordan, Lebanon, Gaza, Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi-Arabia, the Gulf States, Libya and other parts of the world.

Besides the Israeli siege, the Palestinian resistance has also had to face attacks by reactionary forces in other countries, such as that launched in Lebanon in April 1975 against the Palestinian presence and the progressive Lebanese movement by political and paramilitary groups of the extreme right, among them the Phalangist Party (Kataeb). These groups had been receiving open or covert assistance from the Israeli government for more than two years of the civil war.

In spite of these attempts to annihilate the identity of the Palestinian people over more than 30 years, the Palestine Liberation Organization has been gaining in recent years ever greater support and international recognition.

The PLO, recognized as a full member of the Arab League and, since 1974, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, has the status of an observer in the United Nations Organization since November of that year, and is, moreover, a full member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and of the Conference of Islamic Countries, and has been regularly invited to and participated in summit conferences of the Organization of African Unity.

Similarly, the PLO has been an active member of the Front of Steadfastness, formed by Algeria, Libya and South Yemen in the wake of the signing of the Sadat government of the Camp David agreements between Egypt, Israel and the United States. These agreements were rejected by the Arab world and all progressive countries in general because they represent a surrender to the fact of the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and because they offer only a partial solution of the Middle East problem by ignoring the Palestinian question, which is the key to the solution of this crisis threatening the peace of the region and of the world.

Structure: The Palestine Liberation Organization associates all the organizations of Palestinian resistance and all the mass organizations of the Palestinian people, as well as outstanding independent personalities.

The National Palestine Council (which acts as a parliament) is the supreme body of the PLO and represented in it are all the organizations of armed resistance, mass organizations, professional and trade unions, Palestinian communities abroad, and independent personalities.

The resistance organizations are:

the Palestinian Movement of National Liberation Al Fatah,
the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine,
Al Saika,
the Front of Arab Liberation,
the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine—General Command,
the Front of People's Struggle.

The trade union and mass organizations and professional unions that are members of the PLO include:

the General Union of Palestinian Workers,

the General Union of Palestinian Students,
the General Union of Palestinian Women,
the Union of Palestinian Writers and Journalists,
the General Union of Palestinian Teachers,
the General Union of Palestinian Engineers,
the General Union of Palestinian Lawyers,
the General Union of Palestinian Physicians,
the General Union of Palestinian Artists and Painters.

At the last, 15th, session of the Palestinian National Council, held in Damascus, the number of members of this supreme organ of the PLO was greatly enlarged and now includes more than 300 representatives of the organizations and independent delegates, of whom more than 150 are represented organizations of armed resistance.

The same session of the National Council reviewed the Palestinian Arab situation in general in a number of commissions—political, military, internal organization, financial and others—and devoted special attention to the situation in the occupied territories and to the resistance, particularly in the Gaza strip and on the West Bank.

The Council adopted a number of decisions designed to strengthen armed activities against Zionism.

The PLO also has a Central Council, which acts as an intermediary body in charge of co-ordinating the realization of the set tasks between individual sessions of the National Council. At its sessions the National Council moreover elects the Executive Committee of the PLO.

The Executive Committee of the PLO was enlarged at the 15th session of the National Council to 15 members, who represent the different resistance organizations and who also include seven independents.

With Yasser Arafat as its Chairman, the Executive Committee includes Farouk Kaddoumi, Mahmud Abbas, Yasser Abd Rabbo, Ahmed Yamani, Talal Naji, Mohammed Khalifa, Abdel Rahmin Ahmed, Ahmed Abu Sittah, Mohammed Abu Sittah, Mohammed Zuhdi Nashasbihi, Abdel Mohsen Abou Maizer, Ahmed Sidki Dajani, Jamal Sourani, Hanna Nasser, and Salah Dabbagh.

The Chairman of the PLO has under his direct control the organization's Military Department, which includes the forces of the Palestine Liberation Army, the forces of the individual resistance organizations and the Palestinian militia.

Equally subordinated to the chairman of the Executive Committee are the PLO Planning Centre and Research Centre, both insitutions being dedicated to study of the culture and history of the Palestinian people.

Assisting the Executive Committee in its work are the following departments: political, educational, health, information, for the affairs of the occupied territories, for people's organizations, finance, and the Palestinian National Fund.

The Department for the Affairs of the Occupied Territories includes two important institutions—the National Front on the Occupied Territories, which operates within those territories, and the Committee for the Defence of Palestinian Prisoners.

Another important group of social institutions is subordinated to the Department of Information and National Orientation. These include the Palestinian Red Crescent Society, founded in 1969, which has as its duty the provision of medical, material and social assistance to Palestinian refugees in different Arab countries. It operates more than 30 hospitals and about 100 clinics.

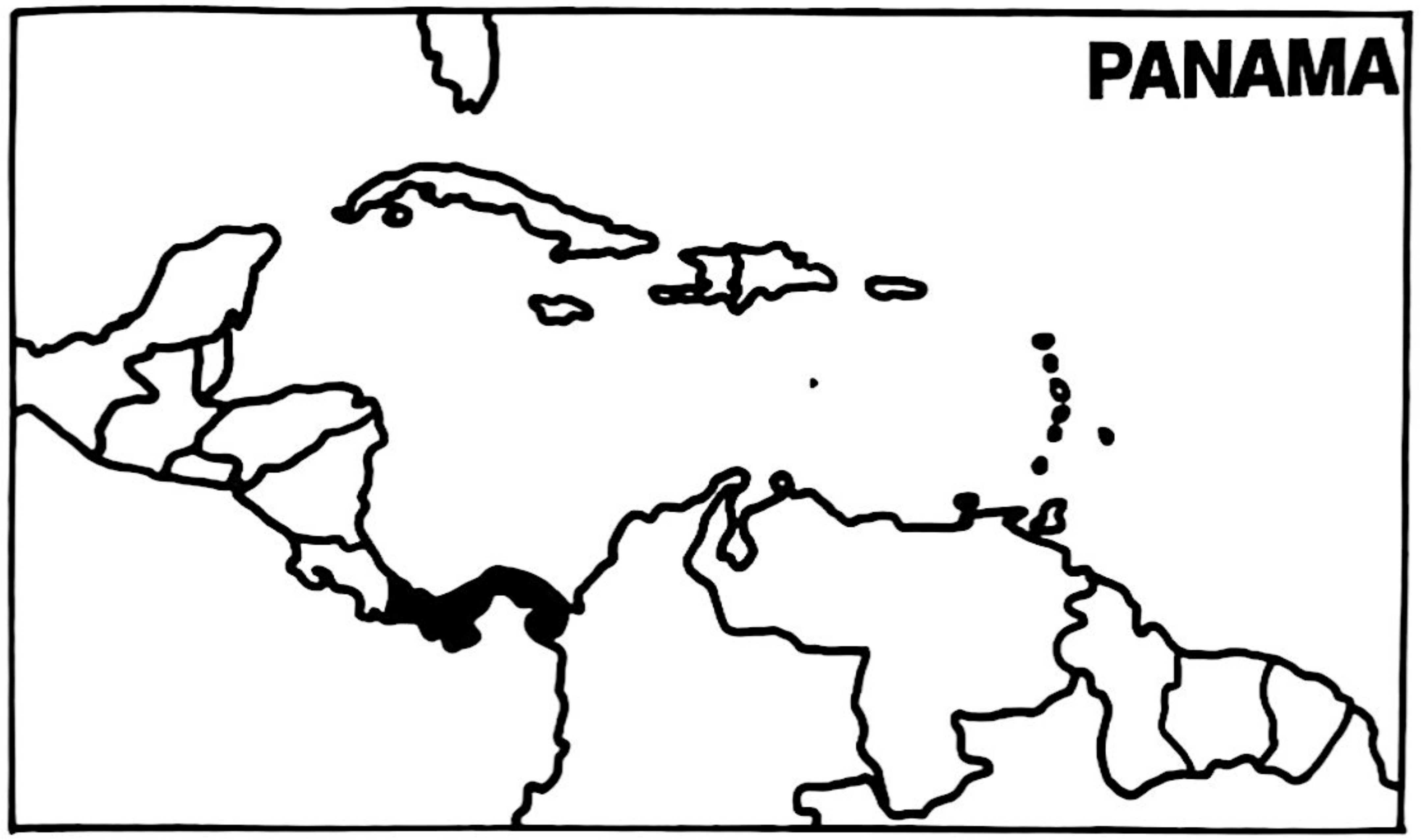
The SAMED, known as "the economic arm of the Palestinian revolution," was founded as an institute for the children of martyred Palestinians in Jordan in 1970 and was transferred to Lebanon the next year. Primarily, it provides job opportunities to these children and ensures their education. It is also in charge of an emerging Palestinian artisan production and is moreover engaged in farming and industrial activities.

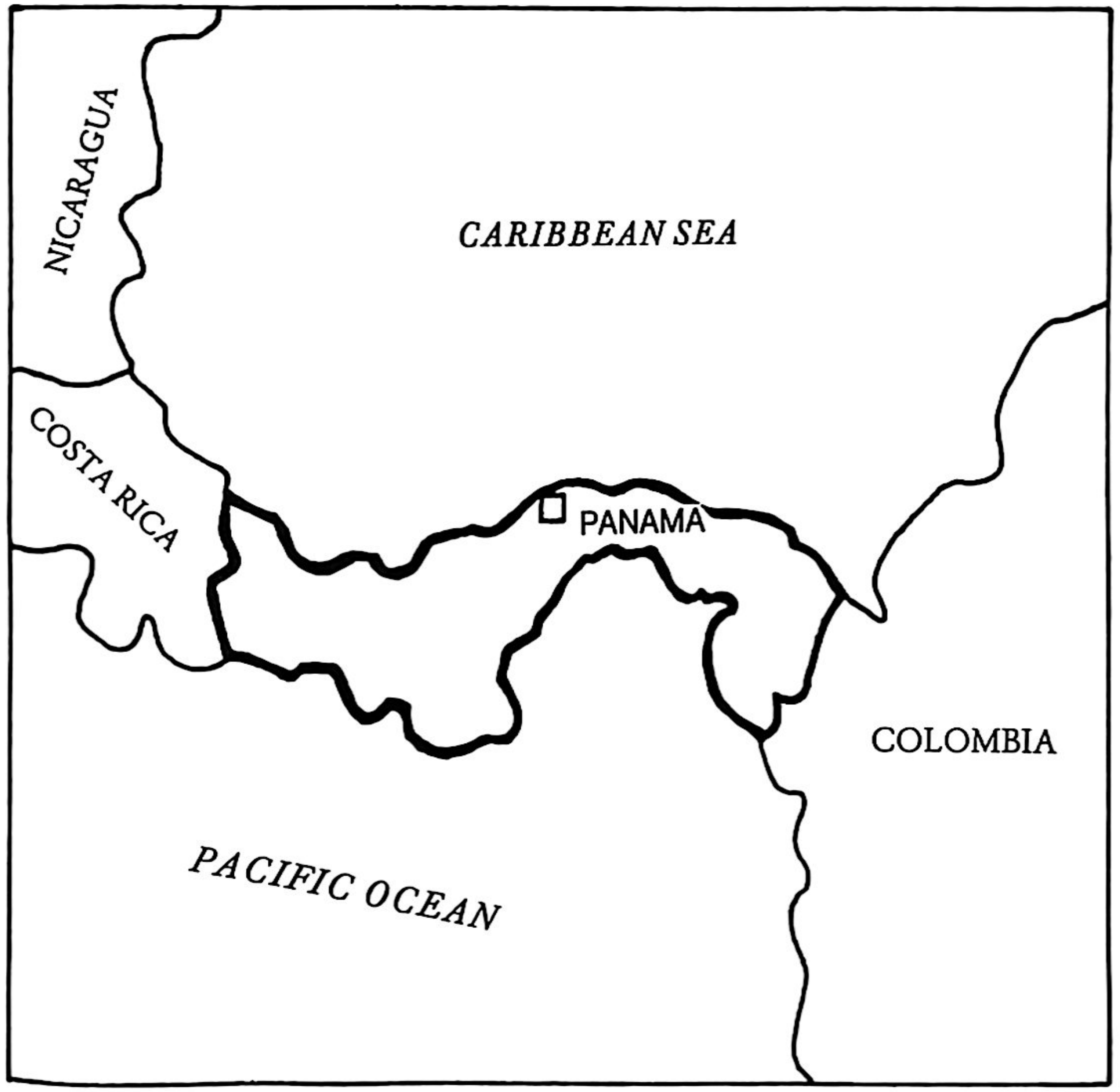
Other institutions supported by the PLO are a Youth and Sports Council, an institute for activities of Young Pioneers of both sexes, an Association of Popular Theatre and Arts, a system of schools and kindergartens, and a Social Affairs and Welfare Institute to which is subordinated the Society of the Blind, founded in 1977.

This complex of PLO institutions and organizations works to improve the living conditions of the Palestinian people both in exile and in the occupied territories, and to keep alive the Palestinian national identity. They also attend to the professional training of thousands of young Palestinians, who, in spite of the conditions posed by their existence in exile, today rank among peoples with the highest educational standard in the Middle East.

Armed forces: The Chairman of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, is the commander-in-chief of the Palestine Liberation Army, which is made up of a number of brigades stationed in different Arab countries. At its 15th session, the Palestinian National Council agreed to step up military activities inside the occupied territories and from the outside. It also agreed to form a Supreme Military Council that would coordinate the armed actions of the different resistance organizations, and to strengthen the Central Bureau of Operations. The supreme body of the PLO called for the creation of a unified command of the Palestinian military forces, which would be attached to the Supreme Military Council.

PANAMA





Official name: The Republic of Panama.
Area: 77,182 sq.km (including the Canal Zone of 1,432.2 sq.km).
Borders: In the north Panama borders on the Caribbean Sea (778 km), in the south on the the Pacific Ocean (1,418 km), in the east on Colombia (263 km), and in the west on Costa Rica (341 km).
Population: 1,881,400 inhabitants, according to 1979 estimates. The annual rate of population growth averaged 3.1% in the period 1970-1978. There are three pre-Hispanic indigenous groups living in the country: the Kuna group in Panama province and the San Blas district, the Guayami in Chiriqui province, and the Choco in Darien Province. Panama's indigenous population numbers approximately 120,000 people.
Capital: Panama City.
Principal towns: Colon, David and La Chorrera.
Languages: Spanish is the official language.
Public holidays: November 3, Independence Day (1903).
Geography: Because of its close proximity to the Equator, Panama is situated in the equatorial climatic zone, with great humidity and relatively high temperature throughout the year. Rainfall is heavy (1,500 to 2,000 mm annually) but there are no violent storms or hurricanes. There are two climatic seasons—dry from January to April, also known as the summer, and rainy, called the winter, which extends from May through December.

In some areas the vegetation is that of the tropical savanna with a fauna rich in such wild animals as leopards, pumas, monkeys, snakes, crocodiles and some less well-known species.

The abundance of rainfall feeds many rivers, the principal ones being the Bayano, 280 km long, the Chucunaque, 242 km long, and the Tuira, 230 km long. The first one forms the Bayano Basin of 3,500 sq.km, and the other two the Tuira-Chucunaque Basin of 13,400 sq.km.

Panama's most promient physical feature is the central mountain range, which enters the country in the west from Costa Rica as the Cordillera de Talamanca and passes through the isthmus to the eastern part of the country, where it gets different names according to the individual areas which it crosses (the Cordillera de Chiriqui, the Cordillera Central, the Serrania de Tabasara). The highest elevations are to be found in the two westernmost provinces—Chiriqui and Bocas del Toro—on the Costa Rican border. The principal ones are the volcano Baru, 3,475 m high, and Mt Cerro Fabrega, 3,335 m high.

Administratively, the country is divided into nine provinces and one district: Bocas del Toro (,8,917 sq.km), Cocle (5,035 sq. km), Colon (7,465 sq.km), Chiriqui (8,758 sq.km), Darien (16,083 sq.km), Herrera (2,427 sq.km), Los Santos (3,867 sq.km), Panama (11,292 sq.km), Veraguas (11,086 sq.km), and the indigenous district of San Blas.

The provinces are subdivided into districts and townships (a total of 65), and these, in turn, into electoral districts (a total of 505).

Brief history: The Isthumus of Panama had come under Mayan and Aztec influence, and in the area of Darien was populated by the Chibchas, who were a farming people and who had mastered the craft of jewellery-making. The Atlantic coast was settled by the primitive Caribs.

The history of Panama as the "bridge of the world" dates from 1513, when Vasco Nunez de Balboa crossed the Central American isthmus and reached the "Southern Sea", that is the Pacific Ocean.

Panama split away from Spain without bloodshed in 1821, when it was included in Great Colombia together with Ecuador, Venezuela and Colombia. In 1841 it became an integral part of Colombia as a department.

In 1902 the United States negotiated the purchase of the rights and assets of a French company which some years earlier had stopped work on the construction of a canal between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and proposed to Colombia unacceptable conditions for the completion of the project. When these conditions were rejected, Washington encouraged a Panamanian separatist movement and immediately recognized the independence of the country that movement proclaimed on November 3, 1904.

The United States imposed on the new republic even harsher conditions and cession of its sovereignty over the canal and the adjacent zone "in perpetuity" under a treaty signed on behalf of Panama by a Fench adventurer who had abused his mandate.

The Canal Zone has brought incalculable gains to the United States—more than the collected tolls or the time and distance saved, which made it possible to link California with the East Coast of the United States and thus to consolidate the expansion of the emerging capitalist empire.

Moreover, the U.S. military bases in Panama pose a constant threat to Latin America, while the financial centre created on the Isthmus provides a platform for the expansion of the transnational corporations.

'The geographical position of our country is our principal natural resource", assert the Panamanians.

In January 1964, 21 Panamanian students died when they tried to raise the flag of their country in the Canal Zone. The national aspiration to gain complete sovereignty was embraced as the principal goal of its endeavours by the government of General Omar Torrijos after the overthrow of President Arnulfo Arias.

A diplomatic battle against the colonial enclave in Panama was launched at all international forums and won the support of the Latin American countries, of the non-aligned movement and of the United Nations Organization.

This struggle for full sovereignty succeeded in uniting all Panamanians and to consolidate national sentiments, which had been undermined by long decades of U.S. cultural penetration.

At the same time, the Torrijos government initiated a process of transformation aimed at building a more equitable social order and at an effective popular participation in government through township assemblies. The major components of this process have been an agrarian reform, an educational reform, national participation in the exploitation of copper, and a "banana war" against transnational fruit companies to obtain better agreements.

Eventually, the United States had to accept negotiations on a new canal treaty, since the Panamanian problem had become an obstacle for the realization of its plans to improve Washington's image in Latin America.

After years of arduous negotiations, the Torrijos-Carter Treaty was signed in September 1977, which abrogated the earlier treaty, stipulated that the Panama Canal would become fully Panamanian in the year 2000, and provided for the gradual dismantling of the U.S. military bases and for the elimination of the Canal Zone.

Amendements introduced in the U.S. Senate included concepts injurious to Panamanian sovereignty, which would grant the United States the right to intervene "in the defence of the Canal", even after the treaty expires on December 31, 1999. "They may intervene," declared Torrijos, "but when they arrive, they'll find a destroyed canal". In fact, the extreme vulnerability of the canal facilities to sabotage makes them defensible only by the Panamanians.

After the signing of the new treaty, a process of rebuilding the national and governmental institutions was initiated with the formation of the Democratic Revolutionary

Party and the election to the presidency of the former Minister of Education, Aristides Royo, who would continue the process of transformation launched by Omar Torrijos.

Under the 1972 constitution, after 1984, when Royo's term of office expires, the President will be elected directly by the Panamanian people.

On July 31, 1981, on a flight from Penonome to Coclecito, the commander of Panama's National Guard, General Omar Torrijos, was killed when his plane crashed.

With his death the people of Panama lost one of their most resolute and dedicated defenders, the author of the treaty whereby the government of the United States had to accept the return of the Canal Zone under Panamanian sovereignty. Torrijos is one of the great sons of Latin America. His struggle for the recovery of the Canal Zone inspired the whole world and especially the peoples of Latin America, who have viewed his patriotic endeavour as a part of the noblest national aspirations.

Economy: Panama's GNP in 1978 amounted to 2,288,800,000 dollars. The major portion of the GNP was generated by the service industry, whose output had increased by about 5% and accounted for more than two-thirds of the real GNP. The manufacturing industry, agriculture and the building industry somewhat lessened their contribution to the GNP. Commerce—both wholesale and retail—increased its performance by 5%. Agricultural Development slowed down in spite of the fact that the Agricultural Development Bank and the National Bank continued their programmes of technical assistance and agricultural credits, and that the Agricultural Marketing Institute maintained high most farm product prices in support of the producers.

Acting through the Ministry of Planning and Economic Policy, the government revised the national development strategy for the 1980s, and at the beginning of 1979 drew up a plan of public investment for the period 1980-1984.

Panama produces bananas, cocoa, coffee, citrus fruit, rice, sugar cane, rubber, dried beans, tobacco and other crops, as well as timber (oak, mahogany, cedar).

There are important deposits of copper ore in the Cerro Colorado, but these have not yet been exploited.

Panama's principal export items are: bananas (60.8% of the total volume), petroleum products (21.5%), and shrimp (10.2%). Most of the export trade is with the United States (67%), Canada (14%) and Holland (6%). Imports include manufactured goods, machinery and vehicles, fuel and lubricants, which come mostly from the United States (43%) and Venezuela (18%).

There is a great imbalance of trade. In 1978, for example Panama imported goods worth 893,000,000 dollars, but exported products valued only at 292,000,000 dollars. It has succeeded in somewhat lessening this imbalance by providing some services to the Canal Zone as well as to tourists, and by establishing a free-trade zone in Colon. Tourism earns the country more than 150,000,000 dollars annually.

There is a great concentration of multinational banking interests in Panama. The government does not issue any banknotes and U.S. dollars are in circulation. Only coins of various denominations are minted.

Government: Under Panama's constitution, the government is unitary, republican democratic and representative, and all power derives from the people. It is exercised by executive, legislative and judicial bodies which act in harmony and according to the will and interests of the people.

The executive branch of government is headed by the President and Vice-President, who are elected by an absolute majority of votes in the National Assembly of Township Representatives for a term of six years.

Panama's supreme executive body is the General Council of State, which is presided over by the President and whose members are cabinet ministers, directors of autonomous and semi-autonomous agencies, the commander-in-chief of the National Guard, members of the Legislative Commission, the chairman of the National Assembly and other officials.

Legislative power is exercised by the National Assembly of Township Representatives and the National Legislative Council. The National Assembly has 505 members and meets annually in October or in extraordinary sessions.

Organizations: The Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) associates the followers of General Omar Torrijos and is the official party in the country. Other political organizations include the Panamanian People's Party (Communist), supporting the government, the Broad Popular Front (FAP) of centrist character, the conservative Agricultural Workers' Party (PLA), the opposition National Liberal Party (PLN), and the most reactionary of all the parties as well as one of the best organized and most powerful, the Christian Democratic Party (PDC).

The main trade union organization in Panama is the National Workers' Centre, which associates 27,000 workers and five affiliated organizations: the Trade Union Federation of Workers of the Republic of Panama; the Federation of Food Industry Workers; the Federation of Colon workers; the National Federation of the Press, Radio, Cinema, the Theatre, Television and Show Business; and the Union of Transport Workers. Although not united, all the Panamanian trade union organizations co-ordinate some of their activities in a National Workers' Council, whose members are the leaders of the individual trade union centres and independent unions.

Other organizations include the Federation of Panamanian Students, which guides the movement of secondary-school and university students and which has a great militant tradition, the Reformist Front of Panamanian Teachers, established in 1974, the Front of Cultural Workers, and the National Federation of Democratic Women.

The constitution prohibits the formation of political parties based on sex, race or religion, or which try to impair Panama's national sovereignty or destroy the structure of its government.

Education: Panama's education standard is high compared with most other Latin American countries. According to the 1970 census, 76% of the population older than six years were attending school or had received some type of education.

Nevertheless, there is a great difference between urban and rural areas in this respect, and for this reason the government is pursuing an educational reform aimed at combining study with work. The objective is to educate skilled and semi-skilled workers who would satisfy the principal needs of the country.

While only 6.1% of the urban population are illiterate, the illiteracy rate among the rural population is 35.4%. The number of pupils attending primary schools is growing more rapidly than the population, whose average annual rate of growth is estimated at 3%.

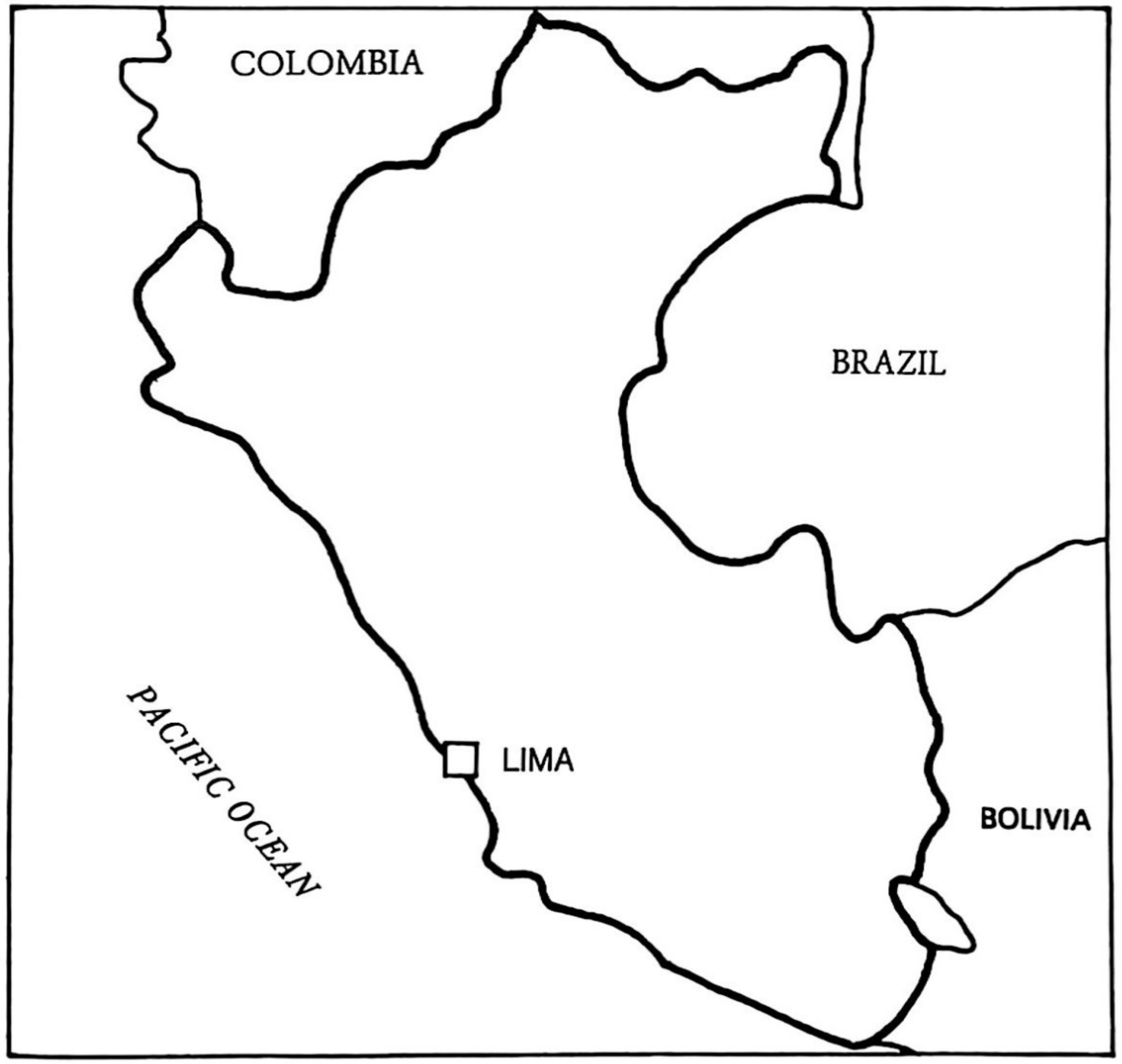
In 1975, for the first time, different public organizations and the Ministry of Education engaged in a literacy campaign which was carried out from January to March. Some 600 volunteers taught approximately 1,300 peasants throughout the country how to read and write.

According to the latest available data, there are in Panama 218 pre-primary educational facilities with 13,177 pupils, 2,193 primary schools with 356,700 pupils and 11,898 teachers. 192 secondary schools with 137,185 students and 6,645 teachers, 21 special schools with 3,455 students and 346 teachers, and 24 vocational schools with 6,128 students and 176 teachers.

Approximately 16% of the national budget is spent on education. There are two universities in the country—the University of Panama and the University of Santa Maria la

Antigua—which have a total enrolment of some 28,000 students.
Public health: In 1978, the general mortality rate in Panama was 4.1% and the infant mortality rate was 24.4 per 1,000 live-born babies. There are 356 public health institutions in the country, with approximately 7,000 hospital beds, more than 1,500 doctors and some 1,350 nurses.
Religion: Christian creeds are practised in Panama, mostly Roman Catholicism.

PERU



Official name: The Republic of Peru.
Area: 1,285,216 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Peru borders on Ecuador and Colombia, in the east on Brazil and Bolivia, in the south on Chile, and in the west is the Pacific Ocean.
Population: 17,263,000 in 1980. 36% of the population live in rural areas. 46% of the population are Indians, 43% are of mixed blood, and 11% are of Spanish origin. In addition there are small groups of African, Chinese and Japanese ethnic origin. The annual rate of population growth is 3.1%.
Capital: Lima 1,262,107 inhabitants (1960).
Principal towns: Arequipa, Trujillo, Chiclayo, Cuzco, Pirua, Ica and Tacna.
Languages: Spanish and Quechua are both official languages. Thirty other indigenous languages are also spoken in the rural areas, the most widespread among them being Aymara.
Public holidays: July 28, Independence Day (1821).
Geography: Peru is situated in the west-central part of South America along the Pacific Ocean. Its territorial extent of 1,285,216 sq.km makes it the 18th largest country in the world and the sixth largest on the American continent. It has three natural geographical regions: the coastal region (160,597 sq.km), the mountains (388,176 sq.km, of which 4,996 sq.km are the Peruvian part of Lake Titicaca), and the forest area (736,442 sq.km). The country is administratively divided into 23 departments, one constitutional province (Callao), 150 provinces, and 1,663 districts. The highest elevation in Peru is the Nevad Huascaran (6,768 m) in the Ancash department, while the lowest point is to be found at 1.19 m at km 445 on the Panamerican Highway between the towns of Chinbote and Trujillo. The chain of the Andes is the most prominent topographical feature of the country. From their peaks, some of them covered with eternal snow, which feeds turbulent streams, the terrain descends to a coastal plain 3,080 km long and between 40 and 80 km wide.

The coastal zone suffers from almost constant drought, but along the banks of the rivers there are cultivated areas. The massif of the Andes branches off into a number of subsidiary ranges with deep valleys and large plateaux. This topographical make-up influences the varied climatic conditions with median temperatures ranging from 5°C to 14°C. Rainfall in the mountainous area varies on the average from 400 to 1,000 mm per year, while humidity ranges from 45 to 85%.

In the forest region there are many rivers with abundant water, along which live indigenous tribes, in particular the Huambi, the Jibaro, the Campa and the Guarya, who make their living mainly by fishing and by cultivation of some crops.

The Andes divide the country hydrographically into three basins. One is the Pacific basin (251,000 sq.km), where only 25 rivers have water throughout the year, while 35 others are dry sometimes as long as three and four years in succession. There the principal rivers are the Tumbes, the Piura, the Santa Rimac, the Pisco, the Ocona, the Majes the Tambo and the Rio Grande. The basin of Lake Titicaca is an inland system fed by the rivers Llave, Costa and Ramis. The third basin is that of the Amazon River, which for 120 km forms Peru's frontier with Colombia. The Amazon is an immense hydrographical artery into which empty the rivers Ucayali (2,000 km), Muranon (1,800 km), Napo (885 km) and Putumayo (1,900 km). These major streams are in turn, fed by countless tributaries.

Running south from the Eastern Andes are the many streams which form the Madre de Dios River (1,448 km) and which, in turn, joins the Beni in Bolivia.

Lake Titicaca, on the frontier between Peru and Bolivia, is the highest-lying lake in the world 3,850 m). It has a surface of 8,340 sq.km and reaches the maximum depth of 304 m, which permits navigation by large ships. Another lake, Junin, is located near Cerro de Pasco and is 70 km long and, on average, 16 km wide. There are numerous other lakes and lagoons of smaller size in the Andean range.

In general, the Peruvian climate is tropical in character, but the great differences in altitude and the ocean currents along the country's coast affect its variations. On the coast the temperature ranges from 15°C to 25°C and even higher further north.

Rainfall is very scarce from the centre to the south of the coastal region, including the capital. In the mountains the climate ranges from moderate to cold at the higher elevations, with the rainy season lasting from November to April. The forest area is hot and humid with heavy rains from November to May.

Brief history: Around 1000 B.C. there existed on the present territory of Peru a civilization superior to that existing in the same era in the Old World. Some 800 years later the same people established near Lake Titicaca the Tiahuanacu Empire, and the present Colla or Amymara Indians are their descendants. At the same time, the Chimu, Nazca and Paracas cultures thrived on the Pacific coast.

Between the 12th and 14th centuries the Quechua Indians overwhelmed the other Indian tribes and established the Tahuantinsuyu Empire in Cuzco under the leadership of Manco Capac, one of the first chiefs of the Incas (Sons of the Sun) mentioned in history. Their capital had some 400 sanctuaries and a large temple with doors fashioned from pure gold and with the inside walls trimmed with the same metal. An image of the Sun God, again made of gold and encrusted with precious stones, dominated the spacious hall.

A little more than a century before the arrival of the Spaniards, Tahuantinsuyu, the Inca Empire, extended over nine-tenths of the western part of South America. It included the present-day Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador and Chile, and parts of Colombia and Argentina.

The Inca state had a perfect system of exploiting the human potential and the natural resources for direct collective benefit, based on work as its cornerstone. Period chroniclers assert that Tahuantinsuyu had eradicated hunger and poverty for its 14,000,000 inhabitants;

The Inca empire was based on an advanced administrative organization and system of tributes, and had a common language, Quechua. It had a flourishing agriculture with a system of irrigation and terraced fields on steep mountain slopes. The principal crops were potatoes, maize, cotton, quinua and alluco.

In the mountains, the Incas built imposing cities, the best known of which is the Macchu Picchu—the Old Peak—which to this day awes the visitor by its magnificence.

The development of this civilization, which combined patriarchal rule, slavery and primitive communalism, was interrupted by the arrival of European conquerors.

Francisco Pizarro reached the lands of the Incas in 1530, at a time of an internal crisis produced by uprisings of a number of local chiefs. By deceit and treachery, the Spanish leader succeeded in occupying Cajamarca and in capturing the Inca Atahualpa, whom the Spaniards killed three years later. He also occupied the sacred city of Cuzco. Earlier, Pizarro had collected a fabulous ransom in gold and precious stones for the murdered Inca.

However, profound antagonism developed between the European invaders themselves. Eventually, another of the Spanish leaders, Diego de Almagro, was captured and executed on Pizarro's orders. Pizarro, in turn, was later murdered in revenge.

The Spanish Crown then established a vice-regency there under Antonio de Mendoza, who had held the same post in Mexico. The Spanish dominion over the land of the Incas came to compete with the Spanish domination of the former Aztec realm.

The city of Lima was founded in 1535, and 16 years later the first university in South America—that of San Marcos—was established there.

The colonization process was based on the ruthless exploitation of the indigenous peoples, on heavy taxation of the Creole population, and on an absolute commercial monopoly enforced by Spain.

On November 4, 1780, Jose Gabriel de Condorcanqui, the mayor of Tungasuca, staged a rebellion and assumed the name Tupac Amaru II. The rebellion spread over a large area —the present territories of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Chile and a part of Argentina. The Indians succeeded in laying siege to and capturing cities, and threatened the European rule. Eventually, however, they were defeated because of a lack of organization and inferior weapons. The fighting lasted a year and at the end Condorcanqui fell into Spanish hands and was quartered. Other uprisings occurred at the beginning of the 19th century.

Once Argentina and Chile had won their independence, Jose de San Martin, the great liberator, landed in the port of Paracas on September 7, 1820, at the head of a military expedition, and on July 9 of the next year entered Lima where, on the Main Square, he proclaimed the independence of Peru on July 28.

However, the actual end to the colonial domination of the country came in the battles of Junin and Ayacucho in 1824, when Bolivar and Sucre crushed the resistance of the Spanish troops and some Indian tribes allied with the latter. Bolivar, who had come to Lima in 1822 and from there led the independence forces to victory, then left the country, which in subsequent years was torn by internal struggle, which was exploited by the large estate owners and the Creole oligarchy to assert their influence in the government.

Peru and Bolivia established a confederation that lasted from 1836 to 1839, whereupon political disorder once again increased. Marshal Ramon Castilla, who headed the government from 1845 to 1862, put into effect a number of liberal measures, including abolition of all forms of slavery, and encouraged economic development, which was then facilitated by the high price of guano on the world market. A new constitution was also enacted and telegraph and railway lines were built.

A war with Chile (1879-1883) deprived Peru of its provinces of Arica and Tarapaca. In the background of that conflict were powerful British interests in the extraction of guano and saltpetre.

The 20th century began for Peru with the same old conflicts between military and civilian rulers. The dictator Augusto B. Leguia terrorized the Peruvian people from 1919 to 1930. During those 11 years, foreign capital penetrated still deeper the major branches of the Peruvian economy in the form of investments or loans. 1924 saw the emergence of a political movement known as APRA—the American Revolutionary People's Alliance—combining nationalism, concern for the welfare of the Indian peasants, Marxist terminology and proclaimed anti-imperialist positions. Eventually, APRA's pro-U.S. and anti-Communist ideology came to light. Jose Carlos Mariategui, a true Marxist writer and distinguished essayist, denounced the intricate manoeuvres of APRA and published valuable analytical works on the realities of Latin America as well as on the role played there by the United States and its monopolies. The same sentiments were expressed by the great Peruvian poet Cesar Vallejo.

After a succession of military governments, power was assumed in 1939 by Manuel Prado Ugarteche, whose regime lasted until 1945. During this period serious border clashes occurred with Ecuador, which were settled in Peru's favour by the Treaty of Rio de Janeiro. APRA joined the government in 1945 under the presidency of Jose Luis Bustamante, who later outlawed this political organization.

In October 1948 General Manuel Odria overthrew the government at the head of a military junta and later had himself elected President for a term of six years. In 1956, President Prado once again assumed the top executive office with APRA's help and was completely subservient to United States diktat. He suppresssed popular discontent and put into effect measures which ran against national interests. In Presidential elections held in 1962 none of the three candidates received the necessary majority and the army seized on this opportunity to carry out another coup and to call new elections, which were won by Fernando Belaunde Terry.

The new government initiated mild reforms, but the people's frustration and discontent soon began to grow. It was then when a guerilla force emerged, organized by the Movement of the Revolutionary Left (MIR), headed by Luis de la Puente Uceda, Guillermo Lobaton, Ricardo Gadea and Gonzalo Fernandez. A number of armed clashes with government troops took place and in October 1965 Luis de la Puente was killed in action.

After his death a National Liberation Army was formed and coordinated its activities with the MIR. Both organizations carried out joint combat operations in the Ayacuho area under the command of Hector Bejar.

In his programme, President Belaunde had promised nationalization of the petroleum resources, which were being exploited under a system of concessions by U.S. corporations. However, the situation in this field reached a crisis point in 1968, when the government adopted a law giving to foreign petroleum companies rights which no previous government had ever granted them. Protests which erupted throughout the country reached anti-government proportions.

On October 3, 1968, the military overthrew President Belaunde and General Juan Velasco Alvarado assumed the presidency with a junta made up of generals and four colonels in the form of a Committee of Officer Advisers to the Presidency. The petroleum law was abrogated, the principal petroleum resources were expropriated together with the refinery owned by the International Petroleum Company (IPC), and other expropriations were carried out in the mining industry and in agriculture, mainly affecting sugar-cane plantations and sugar mills.

The process of structural changes initiated by the Alvarado government also included natonalization of different natural resources and the fishing industry. A cooperative agrarian reform law as adopted and a public property sector was proclaimed.

The military government announced that it would pursue an independent foreign policy of non-alignment, re-established diplomatic relations with Cuba, and activated its international relations.

In 1975 General Juan Velasco Avarado fell ill and was replaced by General Morales Bermudez, who initiated a process of return to civilian government and suspended the process of structural changes launched by his predecessor.

Elections were held in 1978 of members of the Constituent Assembly, in which the APRA forces, the leftist parties and the extreme right each won approximately one-third of the seats.

After the promulgation of a new constitution in 1980, general elections were held to choose members of both houses of parliament and the President. The presidency was won by Fernando Belaunde Terry, who had been overthrown 12 years earlier and who assumed office on July 28, 1980.

Economy: At present, the mainstays of the Peruvian economy are mining and petroleum, agriculture and the fishing industry, which, however, has suffered serious setbacks in recent years. Until approximately the middle of 1975 the government had tried to pursue a policy of nationalization of industry, but since then there has been a growing participation of private capital in the national economy, especially in its most important sectors.

Peru's GNP in 1976 amounted to 769,700,000,000 sols. At that time the exchange rate of the sol was 45 sols per U.S. dollar.

A process of devaluation of the sol was begun in 1977, so that in 1980 the exchange rate was 300 sols per U.S. dollar. In the same year the inflation rate was 70%.

Government: Peru's constitution enacted in 1980 provides for a presidential system of government with a bicameral legislature. A civilian President—Fernando Belaunde Terry—assumed the presidency on July 28, 1980, as a result of the first general elections held in the country after 12 years of military government.

Armed forces: Peru's armed forces number approximately 89,000 men in addition to some 20,000 men in paramilitary corps.

Organizations: Peru's workers are organized in a number of trade union centres: the General Centre of Peruvian Workers (CGTP), the National Confederation of Workers (CNT), the Confederation of Workers of the Peruvian Revolution (CTRP) and the Centre of Peruvian Workers (CTP).

There are many political parties in Peru: the Popular Action Party and the Popular Christian Party, which formed the government after the 1980 elections, the United Left, a coalition of leftist organizations, which includes the Communist Party, the APRA party and others.

Education and sports: Primary education is free and compulsory in Peru. The Educational Reform Law, promulgated in 1972, changed the national system of education and oriented it towards the acquisition of technical and professional skills. The National University of San Marcos in Lima was founded in 1551, and there are 32 other university centres in the country's principal cities and towns. In Lima there are also the School of Fine Arts, the Conservatory of Music, which has regional branches in six other cities, and a symphony orchestra.

The National Library has in its collections approximately 2,500,000 books, some 168,000 manuscripts, more than 11,000 maps, and some 7,000 items of musical literature.

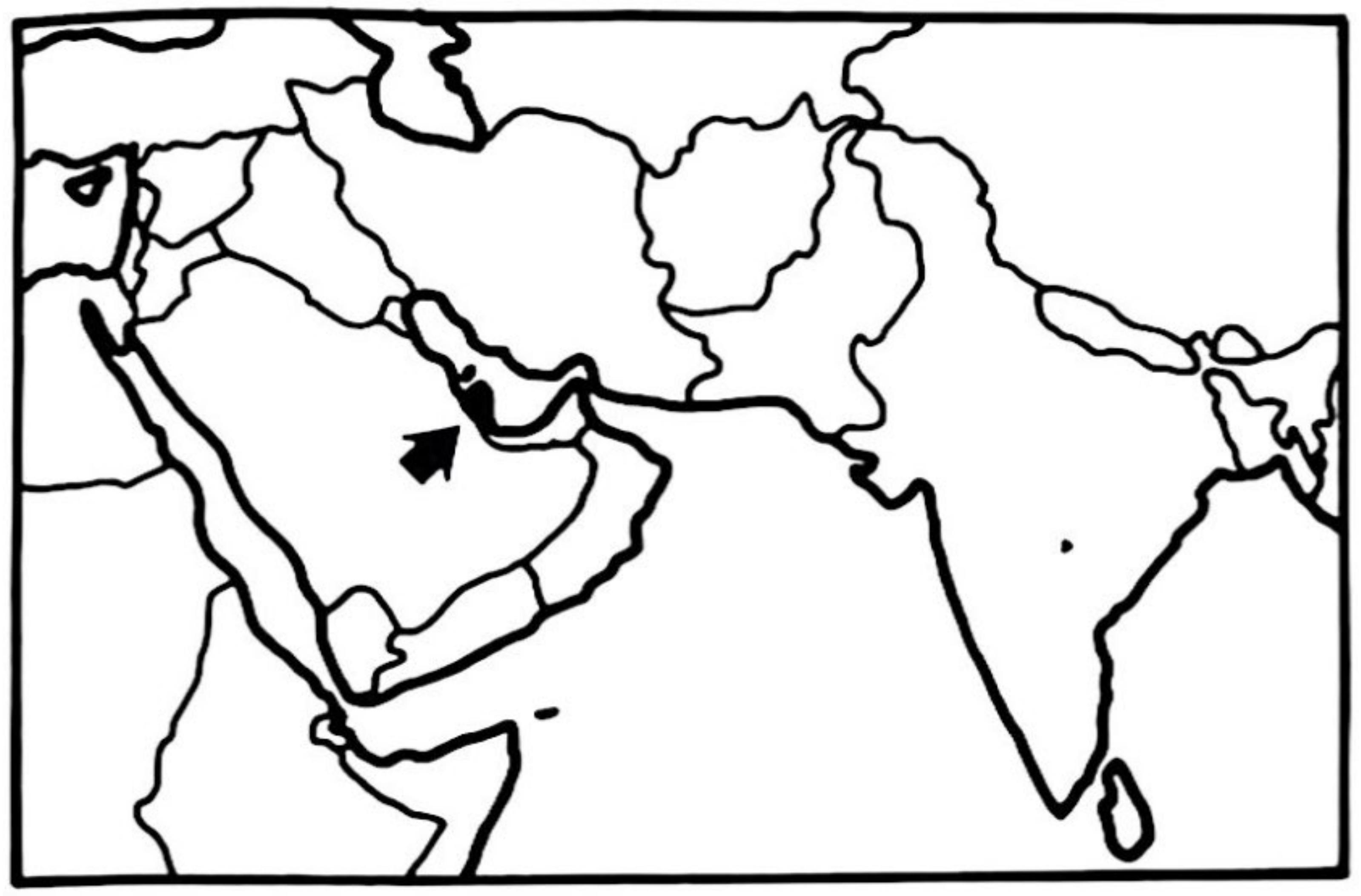
Peru has given the world a number of outstanding writers, such as Garcilasco de la Vega (1539-1616), Augusto Aguirre (1890-1957), Calixto Bustamante (18th century), Jose Maria Eguren (1874-1942), Jose Carlos Mariategui (1895-1930), Ciro Alegria (1909-1967), and others. The government announced in May 1976 that it was investing 39,000,000 dollars annually in technological research, and is implementing in stages a plan of nuclear-energy development for the period 1977-2000, with the help of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

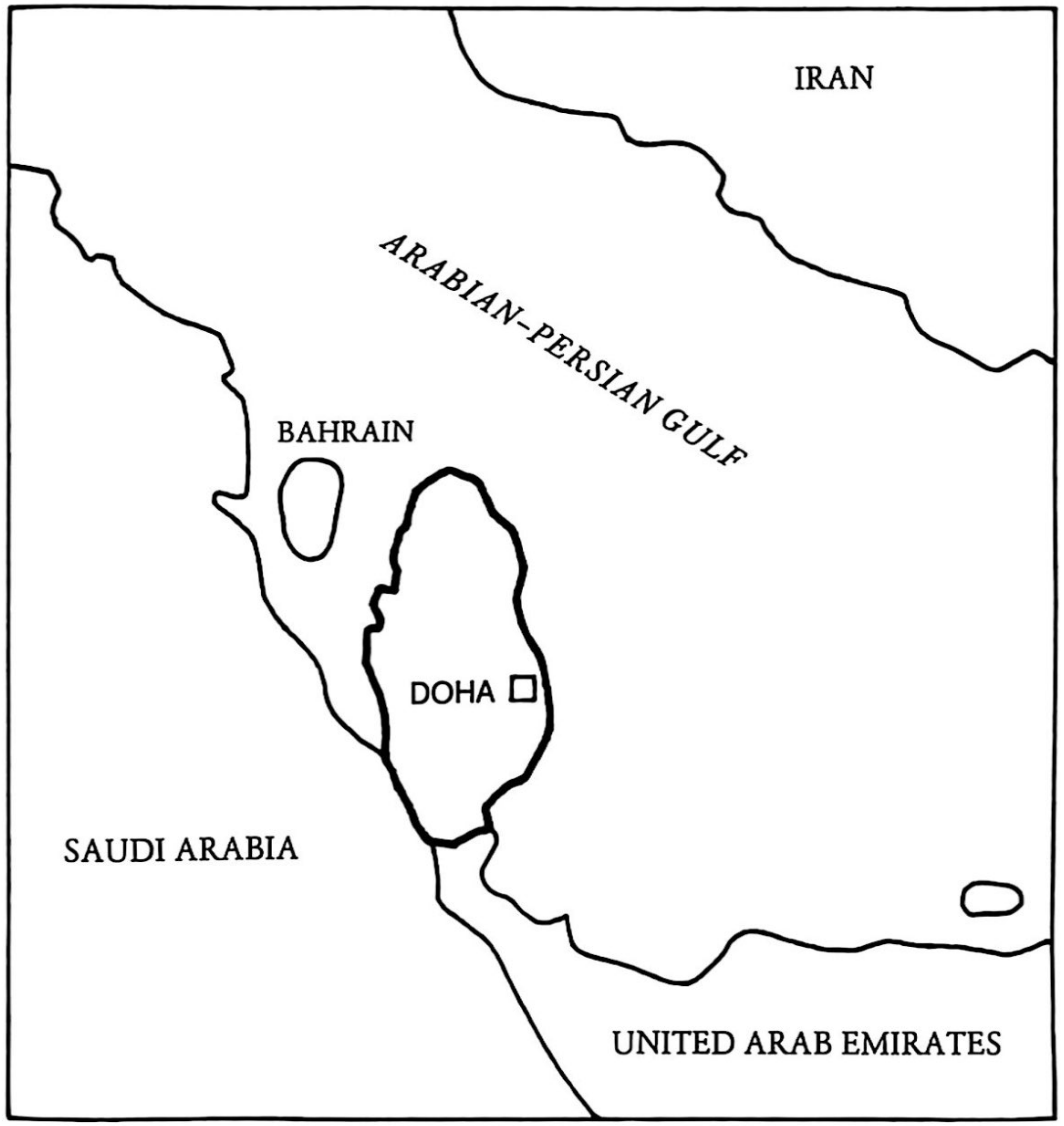
Some 5,000,000 pupils are enrolled in Peru's primary and secondary schools, which have a teaching staff of approximately 140,000. However, as officially reported, only 9% of children three to five years old are attending pre-school educational facilities.

Public health: There is one doctor per 1,400 inhabitants in Peru, but they are heavily concentrated in urban communities. In 1981, more than 30% of the population lacked medical assistance, and the child mortality rate was 110 per 1,000 live-born babies. Public health facilities are practically non-existent in rural areas.

Religion: The Roman Catholic religion is dominant in the country.

QATAR





Official name: The State of Qatar.
Area: 11,000 sq.km.
Borders: The Peninsula of Qatar is located on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. It projects 160 km into the waters of the Arabian-Persian Gulf and borders on Saudi Arabia in the south and on Abu Dhabi in the south-east. Its sovereignty extends over several small islands, the most important of which is that Halul, which has petroleum production facilities.
Population: According to 1979 United Nations figures, the population of Qatar is 210,000. The annual rate of population growth was 3.1% in 1980. A large percentage of the population are foreign workers.
Capital: Doha (140,000 inhabitants).
Principal cities: Umm Said, which is an industrial community of 6,000 inhabitants.
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: September 3, Independence Day (1971).
Geography: The 11,000 sq. km of Qatar's territory is an arid plain where the highest elevation barely reaches 100 m above sea level at the petroleum field of Kukhan. There are many small depressions in what is basically a limestone formation in the central and northern parts of the country. In the south, the terrain is mostly sandy.

Vegetation is scarce and is adapted to the arid climate and terrain. In the surrounding sea there are many coral reefs.

The median annual rainfall varies from 1 to 8.5 inches and the temperature reaches its maximum in July with 48°C on the average, while the minimum of 6°C is recorded in January. There are no rivers in the country.

Brief history: The history of Qatar, the same as the history of most of the small states on the Arabian-Persian Gulf, is tied to the different periods of foreign domination of this area. Between 1872 and the beginning of World War I in 1914 it was under Turkish control, although British presence was felt there from 1868.

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Al-Thani family, a member of the large Beni Temim tribe, arrived in Qatar from the Ibrin Oasis in Saudi Arabia and settled in the area where the capital of Qatar, Doha, is located today.

For a long time, the Al-Thanis owed their allegiance to the Sheikhs of Bahrein and their power was limited to the villages of Doha and Al Wakrah. In the middle of the last century, the founder of the dynasty, Sheikh Mohammed al-Thani, extended his power to the whole peninsula of Qatar. In 1851, trying to rid himself of the Bahreini influence, he proclaimed his allegiance to Emir Faisal of Saudi Arabia, but the Al-Khalifa dynasty of Bahrein succeeded in subduing that revolt, just as a second attempt in this respect was crushed in 1867 by a combined action of Bahrein and Sheikh Zayed of Abu Dhabi.

In 1868, the Al-Thanis won a major naval victory, which became famous in the region. The British, who had already established themselves strongly there, imposed on them two treaties—in 1868 and 1869—under which in the case of any new disputes, the Al-Thanis would ask the British Agent in the Gulf for mediation.

In 1871, the Al-Thanis officially recognized the Ottoman sovereignty over their territory, which lasted until 1914, when after the fall of the Ottoman empire, Sheikh Abdullah signed a new treaty (in 1916) with Great Britain, in which he promised to end slave trade and piracy, and not to provide any concessions regarding his territory or to permit the exploitation of its natural resources without British consent. In return, Britain offered him protection.

In 1951, Abdullah was forced to abdicate and this gave rise to the most serious crisis in the history of the Al-Thani dynasty. His eldest son, Sheikh Hamad, the heir to the throne, did not ascend it because of his extreme youth, and Abdullah provisionally passed the rule to his brother Ali who, in his turn, abdicated in 1960 in favour of his son Ahmad. This in fact, created a situation where dual power was wielded by Khalifa (of Bahrein) and Ahmad, which was made still more acute by the latter's lack of interest in the affairs of state. The problem was resolved only after Qatar had gained independence.

Qatar's opposition to joining the federation of the Gulf Emirates, which until the British withdrawal from the region in 1971 facilitated British rule there, was a decisive factor in the country's choice of independence.

Already in 1949, with the discovery and exploitation of petroleum resources, Qatar's economy took a turn towards concentration on the petroleum industry.

On September 3, 1971, Qatar became the second Emirate in the Gulf area to proclaim its independence. After having achieved its independence, it abolished its treaty with Great Britain and demanded the withdrawal of the British forces from its territory before the end of 1971. At that time, Qatar was ruled by a Sheikh who had absolute power.

On September 2, 1971, Sheikh Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani, then the second in power in the Emirate, read over the national radio the Declaration of Independence. That document was signed by Emir Ahmad bin Ali al-Thani and emphasized among other objectives, that the new state would do its utmost for the recovery of the occupied Palestinian lands and the Arab territorities seized by Israel in June 1967. The Declaration also stated that Qatar would respect the Statutes of the Arab League and the United Nations Charter.

On September 3, Great Britain and Qatar signed a new treaty of friendship and cooperation, providing for new relations between the two countries. It abolished the British protectorate over the small Emirate, which had existed since 1916.

Six days after independence, the Qatar government applied for admission to the United Nations. However, in spite of the withdrawal of the British troops, the government asked Britain for continued military assistance.

On February 22, 1972, Ahmad bin Ali al-Thani was deposed in a coup staged by Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister. The overthrown Sheikh had come to power in 1960 and during the coup was on a hunting trip in Iran. The new head of state, the deposed Sheikh's cousin, who was considered the strong man of Qatar, received the support of the royal family and the Emirate's armed forces. Hamad al-Thani also took the posts of Minister of Finance and Petroleum and for an interim period that of Minister of Foreign Affairs as well.

The first step taken by the new government was a 20% increase in military pay and of the salaries of public servants, as well as cancellation of repayments of government loans for construction purposes.

In a speech following the coup, Hamad al-Thani justified the overthrow of his cousin by asserting that under the former government the people's aspirations had been frustrated after independence. The new government also dismissed and arrested the chiefs of the police and of the armed forces, who were both British. In yet another move, the new government confiscated the property of the deposed Sheikh. It launched a programme of gradual modernization of the country's life.

The demographic problem is one of the most serious matters confronting the country at present. The economic expansion of Qatar produced a large-scale immigration of technical personnel and workers from Europe, Iran, Pakistan, Palestine and India, who in 1980 constituted two-thirds of its population. According to the new laws, the Arab immigrants get preferential treatment.

In February 1974, the government acquired 60% of the shares of the Qatar Petroleum Company and of the Shell Company of Qatar. An agreement signed with the two companies also provided for the transfer to the state of all the rights to the exploitation of natural gas which could exist in the country.

In December of the same year, the government decided to take over all the petroleum companies. A special statement issued in this respect pointed out that all natural resources, all petroleum and natural gas would be owned in full by the state. Acting in this respect, the Ministry of Finance announced in March 1975 that the government would nationalize the petroleum industry.

In 1977 the Emirate of Qatar acquired the interest of the Anglo-Dutch Shell Company and thereby completed the nationalization of the latter corporation.

Qatar is a member of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) as well as of OPEC and is the third largest petroleum producer among the Gulf Emirates.

In recent years, Qatar has invested large sums in armaments. In 1980, the signing of an agreement with France was announced for the purchase of more than 2,000,000,000 dollars worth of weapons and subsequently another contract was signed for the delivery of 14 Mirage F-1 aircraft.

Economy: The mainstay of Qatar's economy is the petroleum industry. Petroleum was discovered in 1939, but its exploitation was interrupted by World War II. It was resumed in 1949, when the first exports of crude oil began from the now important terminal at Umm Said.

Petroleum accounts for roughly 90% of the government's income and constituted 90% of Qatar's total exports. In 1980, the country produced 22,800,000 metric tons and according to official figures 16,000,000 tons were exported from January to September 1980. Qatar holds 11th place among the OPEC members.

The country also has large reserves of natural gas, of which those not associated with petroleum fields alone are estimated at 72 trillion cu.ft. Exploitation of natural gas is another major source of income. In 1977, 416 million cu.ft were extracted daily.

Since independence in 1971. Qatar has been engaged in a process of industrialization closely tied to the exploitation of petroleum. In the past its economy was extremely backward, with one of the main activities being pearl-fishing, which at the beginning of this century made the country produce half of the world's total output of pearls.

Qatar's most important heavy industrial centre in the area of Umm Said, while light industry is centred south-west of Doha.

A gas liquefaction plant is in operation in Umm Said, while another one was destroyed by fire in 1977. A fertilizer plant was built in 1973, producing urea and ammonia, and another fertilizer plant is to be built in 1983.

Production of steel was launched in 1978 with the goal of turning out annually more than 400,000 tons of steel, 70% of which is to be exported to the Arab market. Also produced is cement (300,000 tons a year) and flour, the annual output of which was 35,000 tons.

Twenty years ago, Qatar had virtually no agriculture. Today, in spite of the adverse climate, it has reached self-sufficiency in the production of vegetables, although farming activity heavily depends on large government subsidies, which makes its future viability doubtful.

In 1977 some 80,000,000 dollars worth of food was imported nevertheless. Work continues on the expansion of farming possibilities, although agriculture exploits hardly 1% of the country's total area.

While agriculture employs approximately 10% of the economically active population, fishing, the other traditional sector of Qatar's economy, provides work for 5% of that population.

Yet another important activity is the effort to obtain water, of which there is an extreme shortage in the country. Today, approximately half of all the water used in Qatar comes from desalination plants.

Qatar has two important ports—Doha and Umm Said. One-third of its imports arrives by roads which are the lines of communication with Saudi Arabia and Abu Dhabi. There is a network of some 600 km of roads linking Doha and the petroleum-producing areas in the north of the country.

There exist serious problems with housing in view of the high rate of population growth due mainly to the large number of immigrants, who are vital for the rapid industrial expansion and for the provision of services in the country.

Although no official data are published on the balance of payments, it is estimated that in 1979 it showed a surplus of more than 300,000,000 dollars. Qatar's foreign-exchange reserves in 1978 stood at 196,500,000 dollars. In the same year, exports were valued at more than 8,300,000,000 rials, most of them representing petroleum sold to the United States, Japan, Thailand, France, Holland and other countries. Imports, on the other hand, were worth more than 4,800,000,000 rials, coming mainly from Japan, Great Britain, the United States, West Germany, Italy, and Dubai.

The 1978 national budget amounted to some 8,820,000,000 rials with expenditure centring mainly on industrial development (1,714,000,000) and housing construction 920,000,000).

According to not too trustworthy estimates, per capita income in 1978 was 2,740 dollars.

The national currency is the Qatari rial, whose rate of exchange was one rial per 3.64 U.S. dollars in 1980.

Government: Under the constitution in effect since July 1970, the executive power in the State of Qatar is in the hands of a Council of Ministers, presided over by the head of state and assisted by an Advisory Council of 30 members, whose mandate is three years.

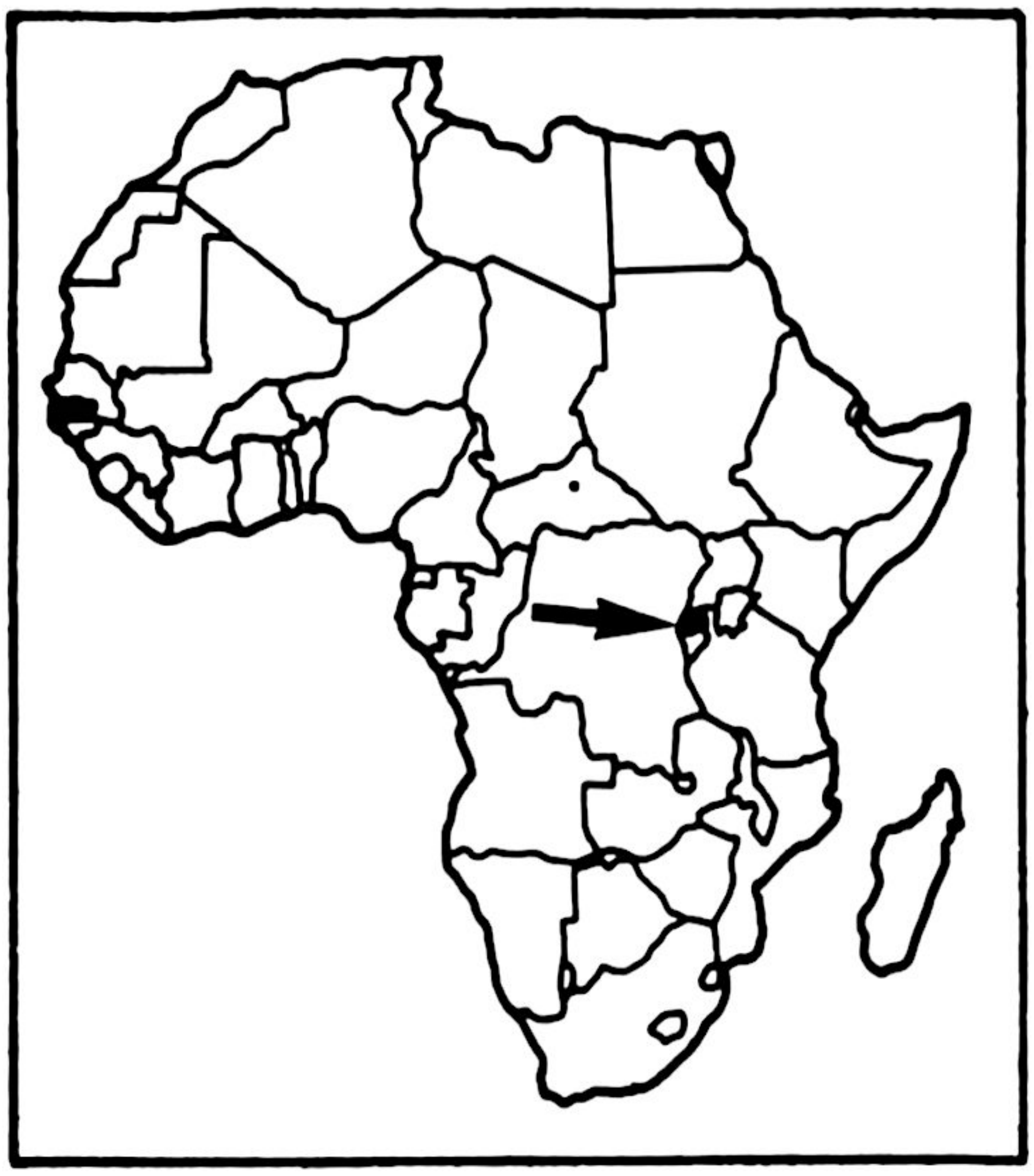
Education: Education is free and the government also offers many scholarships for higher studies. In 1977 there were more than 40,000 pupils attending primary and secondary schools. The country's first university, founded in 1977, had some 1,200 students in 1980. The opening of a University of the Lower Gulf is planned for 1982.

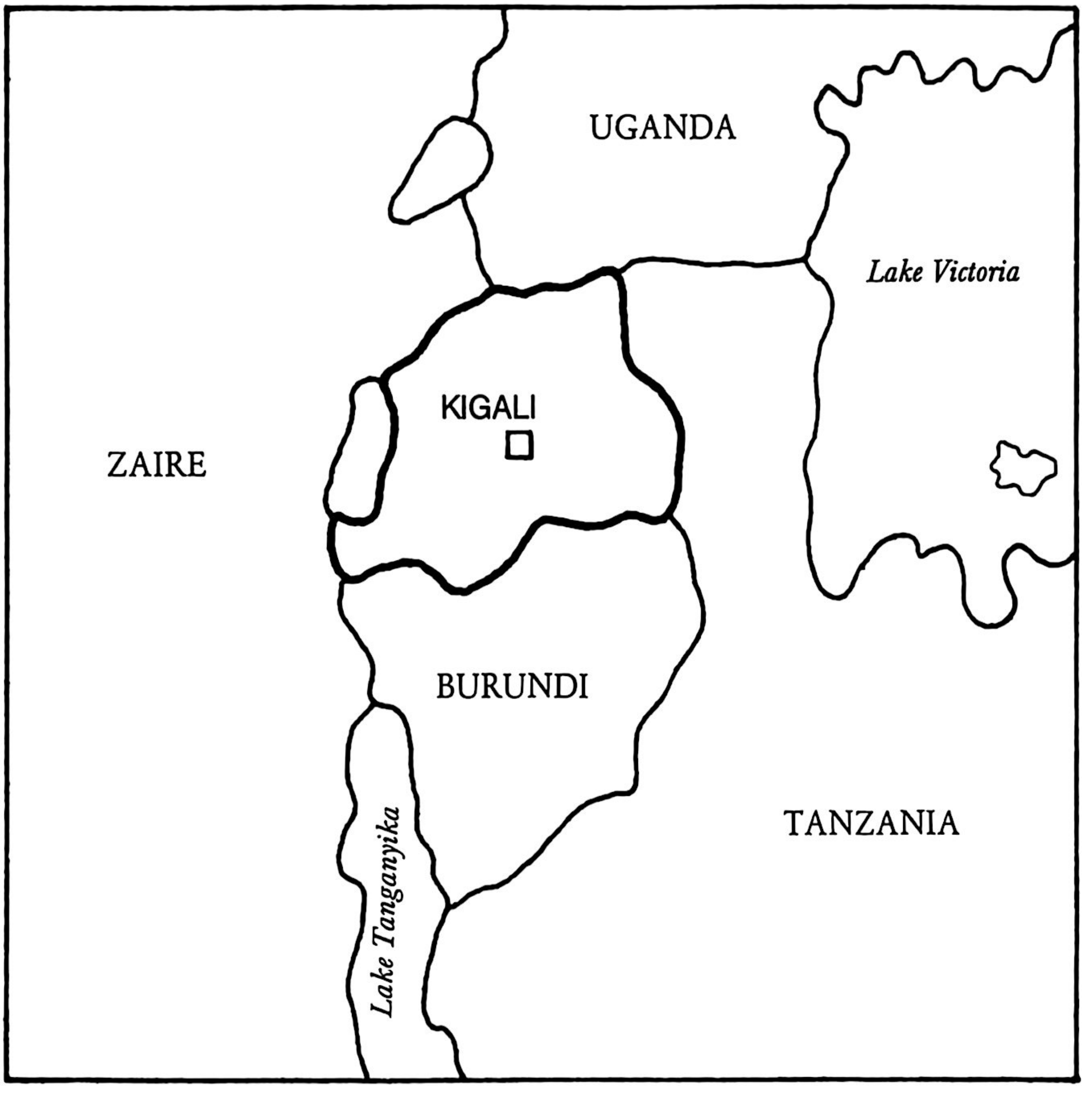
Public health: Medical service, too, is provided free to the whole population. In 1979, there was one doctor for every 930 inhabitants and a hospital bed for every 130.

Armed forces: The armed forces of Qatar have 4,700 men, of whom 4,000 serve in the army, 400 in the navy, and 300 in the air force.

Religion: The majority of the population are Sunni Moslems.

RWANDA




UGANDA
Lake Victoria
KIGALI
ZAIRE
BURUNDI
TANZANIA
Lake Tanganyika

Official name: The Republic of Rwanda.
Area: 26,338 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Rwanda borders on Uganda, in the south on Burundi, in the east on Tanzania, and in the west on Zaire and Lake Kivu.
Population: Rwanda had 4,649,000 inhabitants in 1979. Ethnically, 86% of the population are the Hutu, 13% the Tutsi, and 1% the Twa. There are also some 11,000 Europeans, 75% of them Belgians. The annual rate of population growth is 3% (1977-1978).
Capital: Kigali.
Principal towns: Butare, Gisanyi, Gyangugu, and Giterama.
Languages: Kinyarwanda and French.
Public holidays: July 1, Independence Day.
Geography: Rwanda, also known as "the land of the thousand hills" because of its geographical position in the midst of mountain massifs, lies in the heart of the African continent. It is mountainous in its configuration, has innumerable rivers and lakes and a rich fauna. The average altitude is 1,500 m.

Lake Kivu is one of the chain of lakes in the Great Rift Valley. The median annual temperature does not exceed 23°C. The rainy season extends from January to May and from October to December.

Brief history: The first inhabitants of Rwanda were the pygmy Batwa. Some five centuries ago Rwanda's territory was seized by the Hutu (in Bantu this means "men") and two centuries later came the Tutsi. The latter were culturally absorbed by the Hutu and adopted their language and way of life. However, politically and economically, the Hutu came under Tutsi domination. Although the Tutsi were lesser in number, they established two kingdoms ruled by two families from their group—Rwanda and Burundi.

The social hierarchy formed by the Tutsi had at its top the Mwami. i.e., the King, who held all political, judicial and religious powers, then came the Tutsi—cattle raisers and warriors—further down the social ladder were the farming Hutu, and right at the bottom the pygmy Twa, hunters and foragers.

This was the social structure of the area when the first European missionaries arrived in the 1870s.

From the 16th century until 1959, Rwanda shared its history with Burundi.

In 1884, troops of imperial Germany established an outpost in Usumbura (Burundi), which became the capital of the country, and from there expanded to occupy the whole territory. In 1899 it became a part of German East Africa.

During World War I, in 1916, the area was occupied by Congolese troops under the command of Belgian officers. In 1919, under the Treaty of Versailles, the territory of Ruanda-Urundi was turned over to Belgium, and in 1920 the Belgian mandate was confirmed by the League of Nations. Later on, in 1946, the United Nations transformed Ruanda—Urundi into a trust territory under Belgian administration.

Since their arrival, the Belgian colonizers began plundering the country's natural wealth and brutally oppressed the native population. In 1928, they crushed a popular uprising.

For many years the Tutsi minority exercised power with the Belgians' support. In 1957, the Hutu had only two representatives in the Supreme Council charged with local administration, while the Tutsi had 31.

Before the proclamation of Congolese independence (on June 30, 1960), Ruanda-Urundi was a vice-governorship of the Congo and the laws in force in that Belgian colony also applied to Ruanda-Urundi. In contrast to the Congo, Ruanda-Urundi was made up of two kingdoms, each headed by a Mwami who, however, had no effective power.

Superior Councils were established in 1953, each headed by the respective Mwami, but this was only a Belgian manoeuvre designed to give the impression that Brussels intended to give Ruanda-Urundi its first, proper government and independence.

Naturally, such manoeuvres did not deceive the people. Demands for true independence gained in intensity. The independence movement received great impetus from the events in the Congo in January 1959, and the subsequent struggle of the Congolese people against the Belgian colonizers. It was then, when political parties were organized and demanded an end of the trusteeship and independence for their country. They were the Rwandese National Union (UNAR) of the Tutsi, headed by Mwami Kigeri V, and the Democratic Association of Rwanda (RADER), which held less forthright positions.

In a counter-move, the Belgians supported the formation of the Party of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Bahutu (PARMEHUTU) and tried to crush the national liberation movement.

In 1959 they provoked clashes between the Hutu and the Tutsi, launched a campaign of persecution of the nationalist leaders, ordered large-scale arrests, outlawed the UNAR, and forced some of its leaders into exile.

On the other hand, the Belgian government officially stated on November 10, 1959, that it would promote a "new policy for Ruanda-Urundi", but this consisted merely of promises of superficial reforms. Elections were organized in July 1960, and by fraud, violence and intimidation, the colonialists achieved victory for their puppets.

The UNAR and Mwami Kigeri V refused to recognize the election results, and the independence struggle continued. The reactionary forces and colonial authorities carried out a coup and proclaimed a republic under Belgian protection. The illegal character of this move was condemned in resolutions adopted by the U.N. General Assembly and other U.N. bodies.

On April 27, 1961, the United Nations adopted a resolution on Ruanda—Urundi which demanded that Belgium should hold in August of the same year elections to legislative bodies in both states, to proclaim a general political amnesty prior to the elections, to permit the return of exiles, and to create a climate of electoral guarantees for the functioning of all political parties.

With the help of the colonial authorities, the PARMEHUTU won the elections and formed a government headed by its leader, Gregoire Kayibanda, who was elected President. This party obtained 35 of the 44 seats in the Legislative Assembly, which passed a motion to abolish the monarchy.

With United Nations approval, the territory obtained its independence on July 1, 1962, and was divided into the Republic of Rwanda and the Kingdom of Burundi.

Under another United Nations decision, Belgian troops were to leave the area by August 1.

The inter-tribal rivalry between the two principal ethnic groups was exploited by the Belgian colonialists and the Roman Catholic authorities in the country.

While at the beginning the Belgians supported the Tutsi, later, when the Tutsi adopted a radical attitude with respect to national independence, they shifted all their assistance to the Hutu who, organized in the PARMEHUTU, wanted to maintain Belgian tutelage until they would be in the position to take over the control of the country.

In November 1959, the first acts of terrorist violence took place. In less than 15 months the Tutsi were politically and physically liquidated. Thousands of them perished in massacres condoned by the authorities and others had to seek refuge in neighbouring countries. The government sentenced to death and executed 23 UNAR leaders on charges of plotting against it.

As a result of an incident in November 1964, when a group of Tutsis from Burundi penetrated into the south-eastern region of Rwanda and was machine-gunned by the army, relations between Rwanda and Burundi deteriorated to the point where the monetary union between the two countries was broken off.

When the clashes ended, it was estimated that some 16,000 people had been killed, many of them women and children. This internal situation, in which a major role was played by the Catholic hierarchy, resulted in a stagnation of the independence struggle in the country, which was open to plunder by the Western monopolies in ever closer alliance with former Belgian capital.

On July 6, 1973, the then Minister of Defence, Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana, led a coup against Kayibanda and declared that the new government considered as its primary tasks the ending of inter-tribal conflicts between the Hutu and the Tutsi, re-establishment of peace and development of the weak national economy. Habyarimana stated on that occasion that, as one of the world's five poorest countries, Rwanda could not dissipate its forces in internecine political struggle.

The new head of state founded the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND) as the only authorized political party, whose purpose was to "unite, stimulate and intensify the efforts of the people of Rwanda to carry out their economic development".

Internationally, Rwanda expressed itself in favour of non-alignment and co-operation with all countries, normalized its relations with Burundi, and indicated its intention to play an active role in the Organization of African Unity. Together with Tanzania and Burundi, Rwanda is a member of a regional organization for the economic development of the Kagera River Valley, which borders on the three countries.

A new constitution was approved in a public referendum on December 17, 1978, establishing a National Development Council, a body of a legislative character. In May 1980, the arrest was announced of 12 army officers accused of an attempt to organize a coup.

The MRND held its third congress, attended by 700 delegates, at Kigali in December 1980. The congress re-affirmed Habayarimana's position as the Movement's leader and expressed its support of the principles set in the new constitution.

Economy: Basically agricultural in its character. Some 700,000 hectares of land are under cultivation, pastures cover 565,000 hectares and forests 290,000 hectares. According to 1977 figures, the principal crops produced in that year included 20,700 tons of coffee, 5,300 tons of tea, 228,000 tons of dry legumes, 164,000 tons of sorghum, 444,000 tons of manioc, 177,000 tons of potatoes, 77,000 tons of maize, and 702,000 tons of sweet potatoes. In the same year Rwanda had 629,000 head of cattle, 257,000 sheep, 736,000 goats, and 83,000 pigs. The mining industry produced 2,239 tons of tin concentrate and 820 tons of wolfram. A year earlier, in 1976, 45.8 tons of beryllium and 45.2 tons of tantalum were extracted.

Industry is very small and is limited to the production of some foodstuffs, textiles, footwear and soap. 80% of industry is controlled by Belgian capital. In 1976, the power-generating capacity was 141,000,000 kWh.

Rwanda's gross national product was estimated to have amounted to 830,000,000 dollars in 1978, while the 1976 national budget closed with a surplus of 6,500,000 dollars (71,000,000 of income and 64,500,000 of expenditure). The 1977 balance of trade showed a deficit of 21,863,000 dollars, resulting from imports worth 113,847,000 dollars and exports of 91,984,000 dollars in 1979. According to World Bank figures, the country's external public debt in 1974 was 13,000,000 dollars. The national currency is the Rwandese franc whose rate of exchange is 92.84 francs per U.S. dollar.

Government: The head of state is General Juvenal Habyarimana, who was confirmed in his presidential office in elections held in December 1978. He also holds the offices of Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, and is assisted by a 12-member cabinet. The 1978 constitution established a National Development Council endowed with legislative authority.

Armed forces: Rwanda's forces consist of a National Guard, the gendarmerie, and civil police. According to non-official data, the army and the National Guard have 3,750 men and the other armed corps 1,200 men.

Organizations: In keeping with the constitutional provisions, the only legitimate political party is the National Revolutionary Movement for Development (MRND), founded in 1975. Its programme calls for the elimination of inter-tribal conflicts and for the economic development of the country.

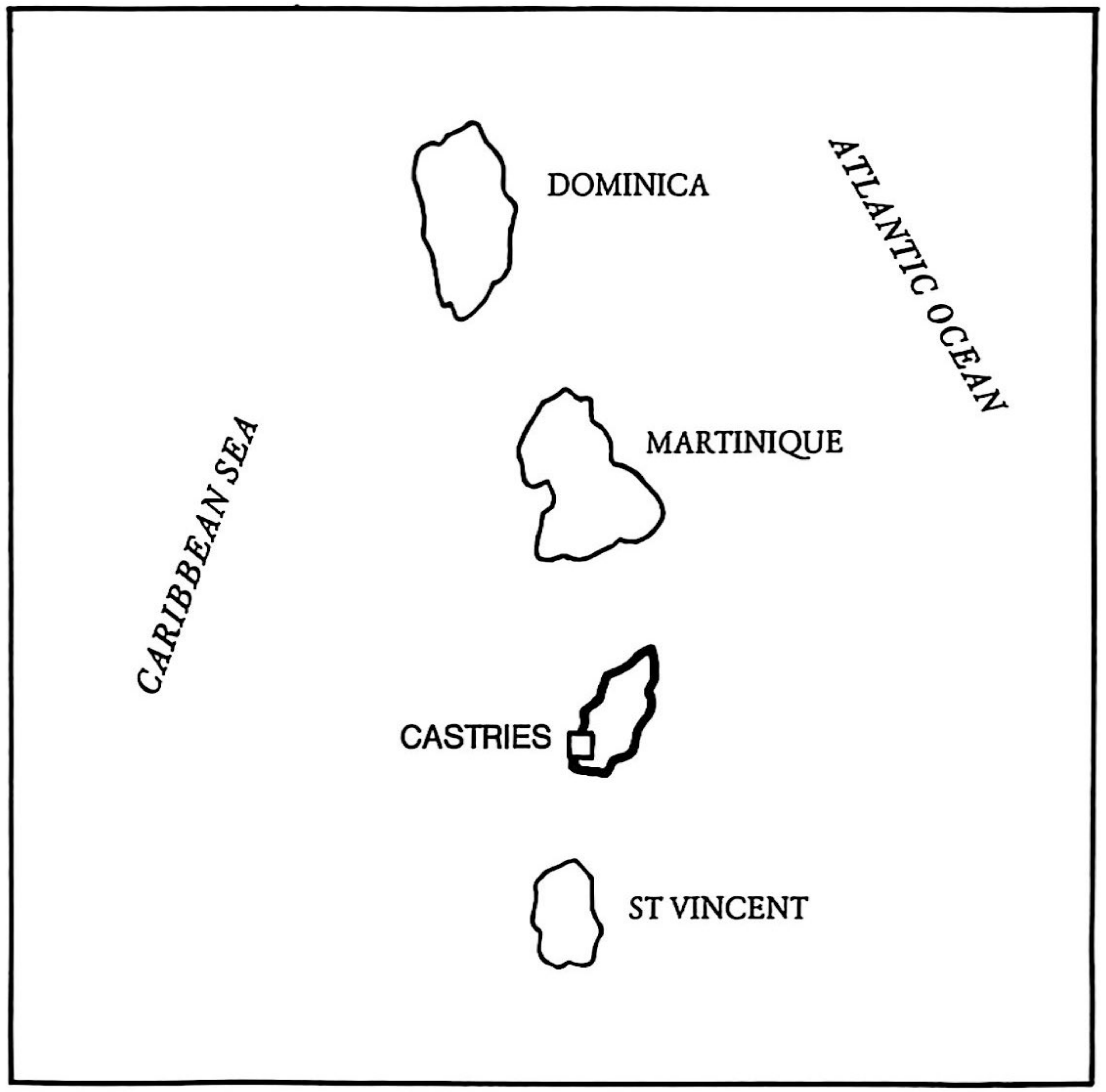
Education and sports: More than 80% of the population are illiterate. In the school year 1976-1977, there were 434,150 pupils attending primary schools, in which there were 8,161 teachers; in the secondary schools there were 12,520 students and 830 teachers; higher educational institutions had an enrolment of 1,069 students and a teaching staff of 184. A National University was founded in 1963. There are also many scholarship-holders attending universities abroad, mainly in the Soviet Union and Belgium.

The most popular sport in Rwanda is football.

Public health: Rwanda has 23 hospitals, 24 public health centres and 152 dispensaries, and a total of 3,517 hospital beds, according to 1978 figures. Official 1974 data show that there was one doctor per every 39,350 inhabitants and one nurse for every 16,000 inhabitants. There were only three dentists in the whole country.

Religion: The majority of the population practises traditional African cults. According to reports issued by the Roman Catholic Church, it has one million members in the country.

SAINT LUCIA


DOMINICA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
MARTINIQUE
CARIBBEAN SEA
CASTRIES
ST VINCENT

Official name: Santa Lucia.
Area: 616 sq km.
Borders: Santa Lucia is situated in the Caribbean Sea and the nearest islands are Martinique in the north, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the south, and Barbados in the southeast.
Population: 120,000 inhabitants in 1978. Most of them—97%—are of African origin, and the rest are whites. The average annual rate of population growth is 1.6%.
Capital: Castries (45,451 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Soufriere and Vieux Fort.
Languages: English is the official language. Many people also speak a patois—derived from French—because of the island's proximity to Martinique, an overseas French territory, and because of its colonial history.
Public holidays: February 22, Independence Day (1979). Also observed is Discovery Day, December 13.
Geography: Santa Lucia is the second largest of the Windward Islands. It is of volcanic origin and its highest point is Mt. Grimier, rising 956 m, above sea level. Lying in the Eastern Caribbean, Santa Lucia is in an area most frequently affected by hurricanes, 32 km north of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and 40 km south of Martinique. The climate is variable with plenty of rainfall. The rainy and the dry seasons are not regularly defined; however, the period from February to May is generally dry, while July is the wettest month of the year.
Brief history: The earliest inhabitants of Santa Lucia, as of most of the neighbouring islands, were Carib and Arawak Indians, who had arrived there probably from Venezuela or the nearby islands. Although the date of its discovery is not exactly known, it has been traditionally considered to have been—and marked—December 13. It was not Columbus who discovered Santa Lucia, but another famous explorer, Juan de la Cosa, who landed there between 1499 and 1504, while Columbus sailed to neighbouring Martinique. It is said that De La Cosa had reached the vicinity of Santa Lucia during a brief exploratory journey in the course of 1499. The first mention of the island appears in a Spanish report dated 1511. In his map of about 1500 De la Cosa shows an island called El Falcon, which is supposed to be Santa Lucia.

The first known attempt to settle the island was made in 1624, when a group of 63 Englishmen landed there but was chased away by the native population. Another attempt was made in 1639, this time by 430 Englishmen, but they, too, had to withdraw because of opposition by the natives. Finally, in 1651 a group of Frenchmen succeeded in settling down on the island, but three years later, in 1654, the French governor Riviere was murdered in his own house by rebellious Caribs.

The French were dislodged in 1764, when a new English expedition, led by Thomas Warner, seized the island. This was the beginning of a struggle between the French and the British for the possession of Santa Lucia, which lasted until 1803, when the island was finally awarded to the British under the Treaty of Paris.

Santa Lucia was then administered independently up to 1838, when it was incorporated in the Windward Islands' administration, which had its seat on Barbados.

Santa Lucia got its own British Governor in 1959. It was then a part of the West Indies Federation, which was dissolved in 1962.

Under British rule, the indigenous population was practically annihilated and replaced by labour brought in from Africa.

Slavery was abolished in the 19th century when, also, an independence movement was initiated by an emerging Creole class, which demanded participation in government.

After Santa Lucia had been given the designation of a state by the British Crown, a constitution was adopted for the island, providing for "internal autonomy", under which it took formal charge of its internal affairs while Britain maintained control of foreign affairs and defence matters.

When elections were held in 1964 for the island government, the premiership was won by the leader of the United Workers' Party, John Compton, a barrister educated in London. Compton governed for a period of 15 years. Under his government there was public discontent over his economic and social policies, and a steadily rising cost of living for the great majority of the population.

Public servants and teachers vented their dissatisfaction with the bad social and working conditions by strikes and protest demonstrations. Compton was also blamed for high unemployment, inflation, political instability and the island's growing dependence on the Western powers.

After Compton's re-election in 1974, preparations began for the granting of independence to the island by Great Britain, a process which the opposition leader and future Prime Minister, Allan Louisy, demanded should culminate with a referendum where the people themselves would cast the final decision. However, his demand was not accepted and the independence of Santa Lucia was proclaimed on February 22, 1979.

Compton planned to hold elections early in July and thus to make capital for his party from the independence euphoria. He was certain he would win, but it was Louisy who emerged victorious with his progressive platform and with the decisive participation in the election campaign of the present Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister George Odlum, who has a great appeal among the masses.

On July 2, when the party led by the two men scored its electoral victory, began what may be described as a dispute for leadership between Louisy and Odlum. It was agreed on that day, that Louisy would cede his post as head of government to Odlum after six months and would then become Governor General. But he stayed in office for more than a year and the situation had not changed.

On March 30, 1981, the Labour Party held its convention in Castries, which re-elected Prime Minister Allan Louisy as its leader. Vice-Premier Odlum did not attend the meeting, nor did delegates from nine of the 17 local party organizations. In a statement issued on the eve of the convention, Odlum and his followers explained their refusal to take part in the session by asserting that their views had not been duly cited.

Earlier, Odlum had alleged that Louisy was illegally holding to his position as party leader, because under its rule internal elections of the party leader should be held every year, while the last such election had taken place in 1977.

Subsequently, in April 1981, Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Odlum announced the formation of a new political party—the Progressive Labour Party—as a splinter group of the governing Labour Party.

On April 14, 1981, parliament rejected the government's draft budget by a vote of nine to eight, thereby precipitating a government crisis, which was already very acute due to the disastrous economic situation on this Caribbean island.

On May 4, 1981, the interim Governor, Boswell William, appointed Winston Cenac as the new Prime Minister of Santa Lucia. Only a few hours later the new Premier announced the composition of his cabinet of eight men, which included Allan Louisy as Minister Without Portfolio, but did not include ex-Foreign Minister George Odlum.

On June 2, 1981, parliament approved by a vote of nine to eight the national budget for the current year, following a week-long debate. Nevertheless, the two opposition parties—the recently formed Progressive Labour Party of George Odlum and the United

Workers' Party led by John Compton—re-asserted that the government was illegitimate and that it should have resigned in order to hold elections, which should have taken place after the original draft budget had been defeated in April.

Economy: Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of Santa Lucia, providing employment to the majority of the population. The principal crop are bananas (of which the island is the leading producer in the Eastern Caribbean), which replaced sugar cane, earlier the most important product and export article.

Cocoa and coconuts are two other important products.

Small industries turn out alcoholic drinks, furniture, soap, cardboard and metal vessels.

The national currency is the Caribbean dollar, whose rate of exchange is 2.50 per U.S. dollar.

The Louisy government included in its programme a restructuring of the system of land-holding through an agrarian reform, establishment of cooperatives, and diversification of agricultural production, as well as encouragement of tourism—an essential source of foreign exchange as in the rest of the region—with state participation. The programme also called for promotion of manufacturing activities and farm industries from local resources and on the basis of self-sufficiency.

Santa Lucia is a member of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), which it joined in 1968. Its import and export business is mainly with Great Britain, Canada and the United States.

In 1980, Santa Lucia signed agreements with Venezuela on the latter country's assistance to the island.

Unemployment runs at 30% of the economically active population.

The government set up a fund to promote housing construction, benefiting mainly low-income groups. This fund is maintained through mandatory savings and is used to finance the construction and repair of housing, as well as the purchase of plots of land for personal use. The government has also earmarked some 1,850,000 U.S. dollars for a project of low-cost housing. Every year, there is a demand for at least 1,085 houses, of which 680 are intended for low-income groups.

Government: Santa Lucia is a state belonging to the British Commonwealth. The British Crown is represented by a Governor General (Sir Allen Lewis), who is appointed by the British Queen.

The Legislative Assembly and the Government are headed by the Prime Minister. The Assembly consists of ten elected members, three appointed members and the Solicitor-General.

In July 1979, the Governor-General issued a declaration stipulating that in the future the post of Solicitor would be exercised by a parliamentarian. Earlier it was held by a public administration official.

The cabinet consists of the Prime Minister (a member of the majority party, which is currently the Labour Party), the Solicitor-General and five other members (Ministers). Local government exists in the principal towns and in villages, and consists of both elected and appointed officials.

Local elections are held every year to choose two or three members of the local government bodies, always for a term of three years. The appointed members of these bodies are nominated by the Governor, except in the towns of Soufriere and Vieux Fort, where they are appointed by another cabinet member.

In rural areas there are rural community councils as extension of the system of local government.

Santa Lucia has had universal suffrage since 1951, and under the constitutional provisions general elections should be held every five years. The last general elections took place in 1979, when for the first time, the eligibility to vote was extended to citizens from the age of 18 years upwards.

In July 1979, Santa Lucia signed, together with Grenada and Dominica, the St. George Declaration on common defence against possible aggression and in favour of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Santa Lucia joined the United Nations Organization in September, 1979, and in the same year attended as observer the Sixth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Havana.

At the meeting of the Movement's Foreign Ministers in New Delhi, India, in February 1981, it was agreed to ask at the next non-aligned summit conference for the admission of Santa Lucia as full member of the Movement.

Armed forces: National Defence is in the hands of a small number of soldiers. There is also a police corps.

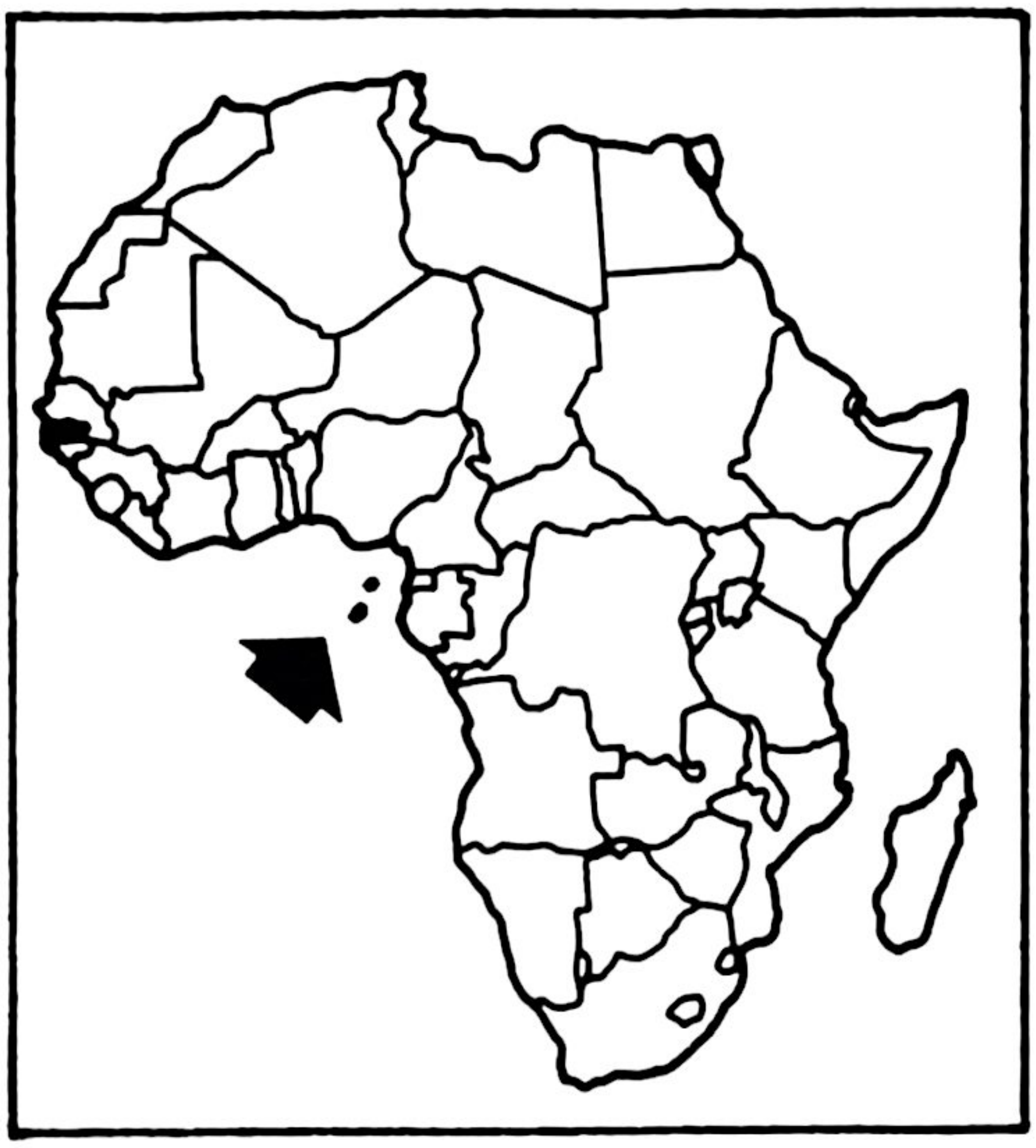
Organizations: The Labour Party, led by Allan Louisy, won 12 of 17 parliamentary seats in the 1979 elections, defeating the conservative United Workers' Party of ex-Premier John Compton. Compton had been in power for 15 years, having been re-elected three times since 1964.

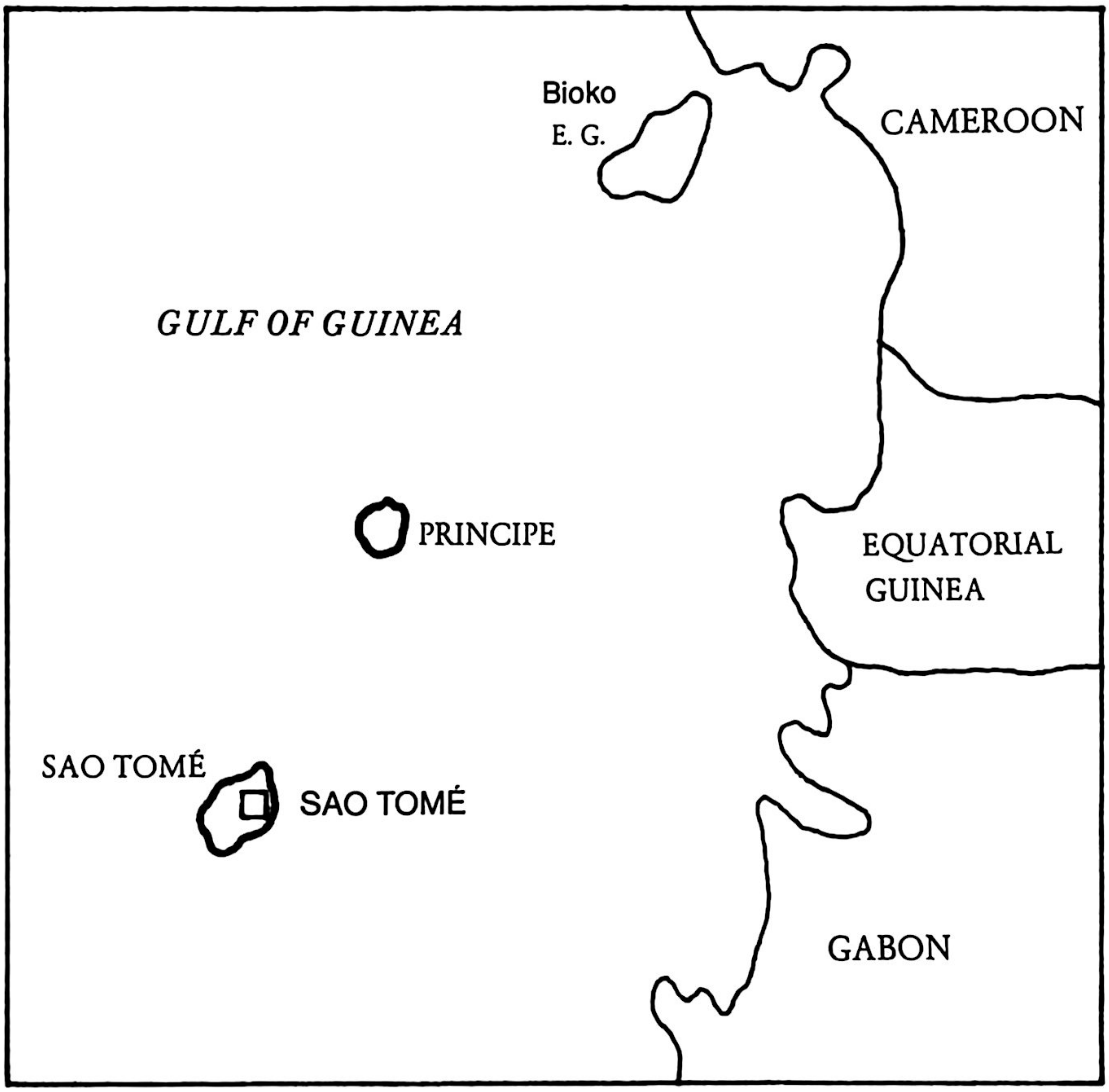
Education: There is a Ministry of Education. Primary education is free. According to official data, there are 90 primary schools on Santa Lucia and four secondary schools, one of them public. There is also an educational complex for 800 students, built by Canada. The government announced in June, 1980, that it was providing a state subsidy for the purchase of secondary-school textbooks so that these books may be issued free to students.

Public health: A cabinet minister is in charge of housing and public health. The population began to get free medical service in June 1980. The government abolished payment for surgery, X-ray examinations, consultations and other services provided in the country's health care institutions. A National Health Council was set up to advise the government on the institution of a programme of free health care. Medical drugs, which must still be paid for, are to be sold for a fixed price. There are six hospitals in the country with the total capacity of some 700 beds. The most important of them is the Victoria Hospital in Castries, the capital. The other hospital facilities are those of Saint Jude, Dennery, Soufriere, Shorelands, and Golden Hope.

Religion: Roman Catholicism is the prevailing religion. However, other religious creeds, both Christian and of African origin, are also practised.

SAO TOMÉ and PRINCIPE




Bioko
E. G.
CAMEROON
GULF OF GUINEA
PRINCIPE
EQUATORIAL GUINEA
SAO TOMÉ
SAO TOMÉ
GABON

Official name: The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe.
Area: 964 sq.km, of which Sao Tome has an area of 836 sq.km and Principe 119 sq.km. These are the two main islands of the archipelago. Sao Tome and Principe is second only to the Seychelles as the smallest African state.
Borders: The small islands, of volcanic origin, are situated in the Gulf of Guinea, some 500 km off the west coast of Gabon.
Population: Some 84,000 inhabitants according to 1979 estimates, of whom approximately 75,000 live on Sao Tome and about 5,000 on Principe. The average population density is 80 inhabitants per sq. km, which makes the small country one of the most densely populated in Africa. The annual rate of population growth was 1.8% in 1976.

The ethnic origin of the inhabitants is rather varied, most of them being descendants of slaves brought to the islands from different places in Central Africa on their way to the Americas. There are very few European settlers.
Capital: The City of Sao Tome (20,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Santo Antonio, Infante Don Henrique, Neves, Ribeira Alfonso, and Porto Alegre, all of them with less than 10,000 inhabitants each.
Languages: Portuguese is the official language, but most of the population speak Creole, in this case a mixture of old Portugese and words from different languages of the African continent.
Public holidays: July 12, Independence Day.
Geography: The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe is an archipelago made up of the two main islands of Sao Tome and Principe, and the islets of Pedras Tinhosas and Rodas. The islands are situated off the western coast of Gabon, the two larger islands are mountainous and volcanic, and are covered with thick vegetation.

Sao Tome is massive in its appearance, resembling a giant whale floating on the sea. In its northern part there are remains of volcanic craters. Its highest peak is Mt. Sao Tome, 2,142 m above sea level located in the central massif.

Principe Island is similar in appearance, but its greatest elevation, Mt. Principe, is only 948 m above seal level. The islands Pedras, Tinhosas and Rodas, on the other hand, have no vegetation. The climate is tropical and suited for the cultivation of cocoa and coffee, which are the country's main export items.
Brief history: It is said that it was the agents of the Portuguese merchant Fernando Gomez (the man who had received in 1469 from King Alfonso, known as "the African", the exclusive right to trade for five years with Africa under the condition that every year he would explore 300 miles of the African coast south of what is today Sierra Leone) who discovered the islands of Sao Tome, Principe and Annobon in 1470-1471, and seized them in the name of the Portuguese Crown.

Sao Tome and Principe were awarded in 1485 and in 1500 respectively as concessions to members of the Portuguese nobility.

For a number of centuries, the Portuguese used the islands as way stations for their slave traffic, keeping captured slaves from the African continent in stockades there until they were loaded onto ships which took them to American plantations. However, the Portuguese were confronted with uprisings of the oppressed Africans, from whose ranks emerged such heroes as Joao Gato and Amador Vieira. Under their leadership, the rebels succeeded in keeping the colonizers immobilized in their coastal fortifications and for several years prevented the Portuguese from spreading out and extending their power through the islands.

A scarcity of resources to counter the military potential of the conquerors was the decisive factor in the recapture of the islands by the Portuguese. It was followed by long centuries of colonial exploitaton. In February 1953, a simple protest by the African population of Sao Tome island was used as a pretext for a brutal response by the colonial authorities, who killed within less than a week more than a thousand defenceless islanders. This massacre produced the first stirring of public and collective conscience and realization of the necessity of co-ordinated actions by the native islanders and the labourers brought to work on the plantations.

In September 1960, a Committee for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe (CLSTP) was constituted in the Guinean capital of Conakry, and at the end of the same year it established its headquarters in Libreville, the capital of Gabon.

The situation in Sao Tome and Principe was debated for the first time at the 17th regular session of the U.N. General Assembly at the end of 1962, and in May, 1963, the CLSTP took part in the establishment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

Most of the time, the islands' patriots had to pursue their liberation activities under extremely difficult conditions, sometimes from abroad.

In the early 1970s, the islands were turned into a vast concentration camp, to which Portuguese brought political prisoners from Angola, Mozambique and Guinea Bissau. The prisoners were guarded by more than 3,000 Portugese soldiers and 700 colonists, who had been trained in the use of weapons. The detainees were subjected daily to barbarous physical and mental torture.

In the middle of 1972, a conference was held in Santa Isabel in Equatorial Guinea, at which the CLSTP adopted the name of Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe (MLSTP). The MLSTP was recognized by the Liberation Committee of the OAU at its session in Accra in 1972.

The overthrow of the fascist regime in Portugal in April 1974 spurred the opening of talks which, however, were frustrated at a certain stage by the most reactionary forces inside the new Portuguese authorities. Nevertheless, on July 12, 1975, Sao Tome and Principe emerged as an independent nation from the last round of talks between Portugal and the MLSTP leaders, held in the Algerian capital.

The domestic policy of the present government is guided by the objective of overcoming the consequences of the backwardness inherited from Portuguese colonialism, whose most prominent feature is the country's dependence on a single crop—cocoa—which had been introduced on the islands in 1822 and which is subject to price fluctuations on the world market.

For this purpose, the government and the MLSTP announced the formation of an Association of Collective Producers as a part of an agrarian reform programme which holds first place in the political platform raised by the liberation movement.

While it is taking measures to promote internal development, the government of Sao Tome and Principe must at the same time face many provocations on the part of internal and external reaction. On July 5, 1977, Pinto Da Costa, the President of the Republic, denounced in a National Radio broadcast an attempt to overthrow the government; the plot, named "Cobra 77", had as its objective a division of the country into two parts and the establishment of a monarchy on Principe Island. The plan was frustrated by the army and the population.

On December 7 of the same year, the counter-revolutionaries who had tried to overthrow the legitimate government of Sao Tome and Principe, were sentenced to prison terms.

On February 14, 1978, the President of Sao Tome and Principe, addressing the United Nations, condemned the presence of unidentified ships and reconnaissance aircraft near his country and their systematic violation of the air space and territorial waters of Sao Tome and Principe. On the 26th of the same month, vigilante groups were established in the country by workers and other inhabitants for the purpose of countering any aggression which the reactionary forces might attempt.

In July 1978, the Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe held its first congress, which was attended by 600 delegates. Since that meeting, work has begun on building bodies of people's power and on expanding the measures, introduced after independence, for improving the situation of the popular masses. Recently, the government has undertaken to create new organizational structures for both foreign and domestic trade.

Economy: Production of cocoa and copra are the two main economic activities on the islands. Cocoa, which accounts for two-thirds of the country's total exports, is produced on large plantations occupying 93% of all cultivable land on which approximately 50% of the population live. The other exportable products include tobacco and palm oil.

80% of the fertile land was nationalized in the first year after independence, and agricultural production is organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Agrarian Reform.

The government also nationalized in 1975 the local branch of the Portuguese National Overseas Bank and reconstructed the National Bank of Sao Tome and Principe.

There is little industry of artisan-like character—bakeries, coffee-drying facilities, small soap factories and breweries, as well as manufacture of building materials.

The government is planning to diversify agricultural production as one of the primary objectives of the agrarian reform, as well as to build factories for processing cocoa and for making fruit juices. Yet another government project is the development of the tourist industry.

Since 1977, the national currency has been the dobra.

Sao Tome and Principe trade mainly with Portugal, the Federal Republic of Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark. In 1975 its exports amounted to 108,432,000 escudos, while imports were worth 288,469,000 escudos.

Government: In the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe executive power is vested in the President of the Republic, who is assisted by a cabinet of 11 ministers. Legislative power is vested in a National Assembly. The country's constitution was promulgated on December 12, 1975.

Organizations: The Movement for the Liberation of Sao Tome and Principe (MLSTP), founded in 1961, is the only political party in the country. Attached to it are organizations catering for women and the youth.

Culture, education and sports: Prior to 1975, the majority of the population was illiterate. After independence had been won, the task was undertaken to eradicate illiteracy, an activity involving the government.

There are only primary and secondary schools in the country. In every school the pupils themselves elect a teachers' council, which then appoints from one of its members the school's principal.

There is only one secondary school, known as the Technical Institute, which has 1,500 students and a teaching staff of 60, 12 of whom are local.

In 1977, political instruction concerning the country, its culture and traditional customs was introduced into the schools' curriculum for the first time. A commission was also established, charged with the preparation and publication of new textbooks, since Angolan books had been used thus far. UNESCO experts organize courses for local teachers to improve their qualifications.

Yet another noteworthy aspect of the country's educational policy is the stimulus given to the development of the arts.

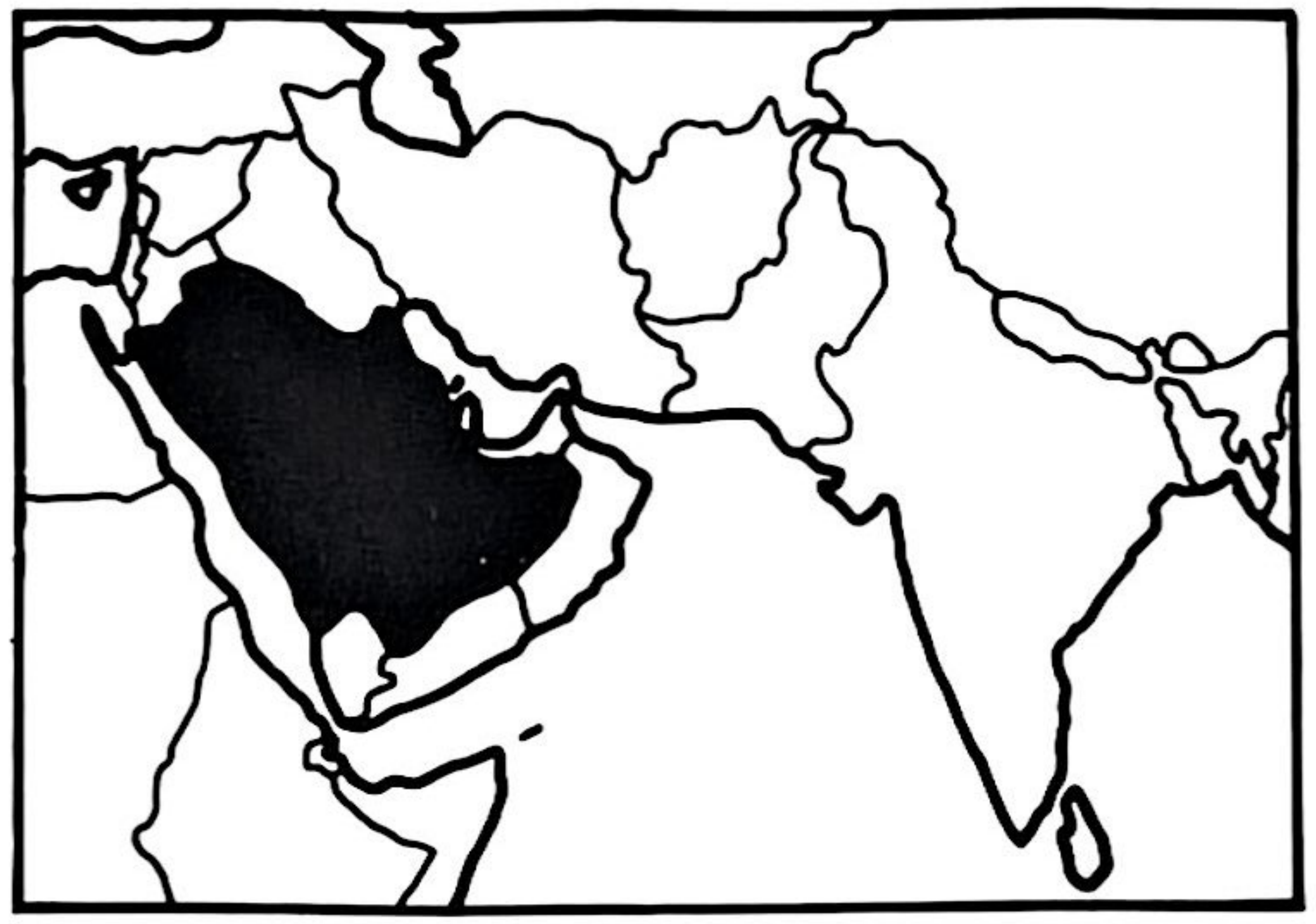
Education is free and school attendance is compulsory for all citizens above the age of six.

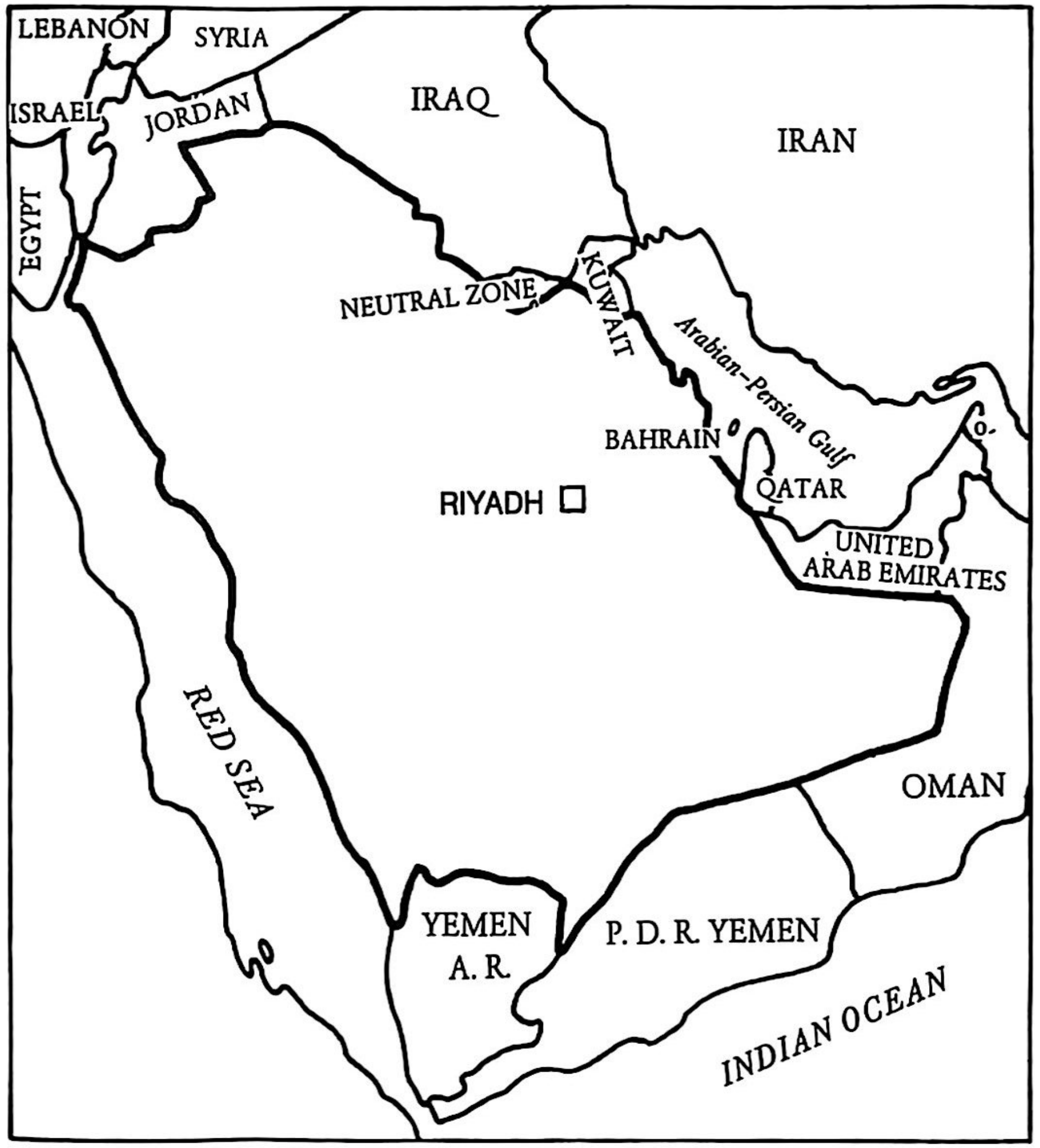
Football is the most popular sport in the country, but track and field athletic events are also popular.

Public health: There were two hospitals in 1976—one in Sao Tome, the other in the town of San Antonio on Principe Island. Free medical care was introduced in 1975, after independence had been won.

Religion: The majority of the population are Roman Catholics although the traditional cults still continue to exist.

SAUDI ARABIA




LEBANON
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KUWAIT
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RIYADH
QATAR
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES
RED SEA
OMAN
YEMEN A. R.
P. D. R. YEMEN
INDIAN OCEAN

Official name: The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
Area: 2,149,690 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Saudi Arabia borders on Jordan and Iraq, in the south on the Arab Republic of Yemen, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and on Oman. In the east is the Arabian-Persian Gulf and its frontiers with Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, while its western coast lies on the Red Sea.
Population: There exist no exact figures regarding the total number of inhabitants, but according to 1979 United Nations estimates Saudi Arabia's population was approximately 8,110,000. It is also estimated that some 50% of the population are nomads and 25% live in urban areas. The population grew by 12% between 1974 and 1978. At present, the annual rate of population growth is 3%. About a quarter of the total population are foreigners.
Capital: Riyadh (450,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Jidda (300,000 inhabitants), Mecca (250,000 inhabitants), and Medina (60,000 inhabitants).
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holiday: November 2.
Geography: Saudi Arabia occupies most of the Arabian Peninsula, which is the largest peninsula in the world. Its size makes it the largest Middle Eastern country. Topographically, it has two main characteristic features. There is a central plateau ending with a high ridge in the west, overlooking the Red Sea, but gradually and gently sloping on the opposite side towards the Arabian-Persian Gulf. Then, a mountain chain, 1,200 to 1,500 m in altitude, crosses the heart of the peninsula, running from the north of Yemen to Sedeir. There are no actual, permanent rivers in Arabia, just numerous dry river beds that fill with water only when it rains, but that happens very rarely in most parts of the country. The average annual rainfall is 60 mm, but in the high-lying areas in the south and the west it amounts to as much as 200 mm. The climate is extremely dry. Saudi Arabia lies in a part of the world with the highest summer temperatures, but relative humidity is very high in the coastal areas.

Although Saudi Arabia has been traditionally viewed as a desert with a few oases, it actually has three types of areas—deserts, arid steppes, and oases with cultivable land. In the south is the vast Rub al-Khali (the empty place), which is a desert extending in a semicircle in the south-east of the peninsula. In the north is another large desert, the Nafud.

Arid steppes cover most of the rest of Saudi Arabia. These are vast stretches of land with a hard and dusty surface, flat and undulating, with natural hollows containing a limited quantity of water. The vegetation is course.

The most important oases are to be found in the area of Nejd. Another highly fertile area is Asir—the object of a lengthy dispute with North Yemen—which is matched only by the Hassa low plain in the east.

Brief history: The known ancient history of the Arabian Peninsula concerns basically the permanently settled civilizations in its south. While the fertile lands of Yemen were suited for agriculture and were the home of some major pre-Islamic kingdoms (the Mineans, the Sabeans and the Himyarits), the vast desert regions that form the modern Saudi realm were inhabited in Antiquity for long centuries by independent nomadic tribes, which traded with the Arabs settled in the area of Hedjaz in the west of the peninsula.

The Romans, who gave the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula the well-known name *Arabia Felix*, called the north *Arabia Petrea*. Through there passed important trading routes between the Fertile Crescent and Egypt. Medina and Mecca were the two main urban centres of what is today Saudi Arabia in Antiquity and the starting points of the unifying process launched much later with the emergence of Islam.

In the sixth century, the Persians and the Ethiopians attacked the Arabs after the fall of the Himyarit Empire, and Hedjaz decayed as a centre of commerce. The wealthy merchant families of Arabia favoured the unification of the individual tribes, so that they could open new trading routes and conquer new territories.

The great Islamic expansion, which began in the seventh century, spread precisely from the towns of Mecca and Medina. The former was a commercial centre lacking in agriculture while Medina lay in an oasis.

The birth of Islam and primarily its great expansion a few years later are explained by some historians as the result of an inter-relationship of several factors of different character. They included emigration to the north of the Arabian Peninsula of whole tribes coming from the decaying civilizations in the south and conflicts between pagan Arabs, Jews and Christians in Arabia's commercial centres.

The founder of the new religion was Mohammed, an Arab from the Hashem family, which belonged to the Quraish tribe occupying Mecca, where Mohammed was born in 571 A.D. In those days Mecca was not only an important commercial centre, but was also important from the religious point of view as the site of the Kaaba, an object—before the emergence of Islam—of a pagan cult practised independently by different tribes of the peninsula, as well as an object of pilgrimages.

In the year 610, Mohammed began to formulate the principles and rules of the new religion, which was strictly monotheistic. Its name, Islam, is of Arabic origin and signifies the principle of man's submission to God's will, but it is also used with the meaning of God's final revelation to mankind.

In 622, Mohammed was expelled from Mecca, thus giving origin to the Moslem era, which began with his journey (Hijra) to Medina. That was the year 1 of the Islamic calendar.

Rival tribal factions opposed to those in power in Mecca embraced the Prophet's teachings and furthered the establishment in Medina of the first Moslem state, from which the successors of the founder of Islam, the caliphs, launched the Islamic expansion in 633, one year after Mohammed's death.

The conquests undertaken by the first four caliphs—Abu Bakr (632-634), Omar (634-644), Osman (644-656) and Ali (656-661)—extended the nascent empire to the whole peninsula, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, Egypt, Cyrenaica and Armenia.

The continued Islamic expansion brought the new religion and the Arabic language all the way to North Africa and Spain, but while it inspired the formation of the greatest empire the world had seen until then, this movement, born in the very heart of the Arabian Peninsula, gradually lost its impact on the political life of the land of its origin. Since the early stage of the expansion, Mecca and Medina, although turned into holy places of pilgrimage and religious reverence, ceded their political primacy to other capitals controlling the vast Moslem world—Damascus, Baghdad, Cairo and Istanbul.

Between the Eighth and 19th centuries external influences and attempts to control the peninsula met with little success. The early caliphs, the Abbasids (750-1258) tried to dominate and tax some parts of the peninsula but without success. During that long period the native tribes asserted their autonomy.

The last Moslem empire, that of the Ottoman Turks, conquered Constantinople in 1453 and occupied Egypt in 1517. From there it sent its forces to Yemen and Mecca to impose on them its administative control, which lasted for about a century, until the decay of its power. In the 18th century the Iranians launched an invasion from the Gulf, seizing some settlements along the coast of Oman, but this in no way touched upon the tribes living in the interior of the peninsula.

The history of the present ruling family in Saudi Arabia dates back to the 18th century. Since then it has ruled in the area of Nejd, in the east of the Arabian Peninsula, over a coalition of tribes, which produced for the first time since the days of the Prophet Mohammed a force capable of imposing central authority over the whole area.

One of the sources of its power was an alliance formed between the son of the founder of the dynasty, Mohammed ibn Saud, and the religious reformer Mohammed ibn Abdel Wahab (1703-1791), a member of the Tamin tribe, who preached a return to authentic and pure Islam as the only means of transforming Arab society. Under the banner of this religious orthodoxy wars were launched in 1747 for the conquest of areas adjacent to Nejd. The wars lasted for a century and a half.

The Wahabi doctrine, promoted by the Saudis with the sword, was extended to the population of Dariya in the Nejd and to the whole of that province, including the town of Riyadh.

When Mohammed ibn Saud died in 1756, his son, Abdel Aziz ibn Mohammed, continued the conquest and in 1803 succeeded in capturing a part of the area of Hedjaz in the west of the peninsula, including the towns of Mecca and Medina. Earlier he had seized parts of the Gulf coast and sacked the holy city of Kerbala in central Iraq, venerated by Shi'a Moslems. By 1806, the dominion of the House of Saud also reached the ports of Yanbu and Jidda on the Red Sea.

However, a temporary halt was put to the Saudi advance in 1811. Confronted by the intention of Saud ibn Abdel Aziz, the son of Abdel Aziz ibn Mohammed, to establish an Islamic Arab state, the Ottoman Empire intervened in the peninsula. With the help of their vassal, Mohammed Ali Pasha of Egypt, the Turks launched a military campaign against the Saudis, and in 1818 seized Riyadh, the capital of Nejd. They restored their control of Mecca and Medina, and, until 1840, the Egyptian-Ottoman rule of Nejd and Hedjaz was total. The rulers of Nejd had to accept Ottoman sovereignty until 1843, when Feisal ibn Turki tried to restore the Saudi state. However, his succession provoked a conflict within the ruling family, which lasted for more than 30 years. This rivalry, which weakened the House of Saud, enabled a rival family, the Rashids, from nearby Hail, to seize the Saudi dominions with Turkish help.

Between 1891 and 1902, Abdul Rahman, the last heir of Feisal ibn Turki, found refuge in Kuwait after Mohammed ibn Rashid, the Emir of Hail, had taken Riyadh. 1902 saw the recovery of the Saudis thanks to Abdel Aziz ibn Abdel Rahman, best known as Ibn Saud. In that year he left Kuwait and reconquered Riyadh, for which deed he was given the throne of the Saud family, which his father had vacated. In a surprise operation, Ibn Saud occupied the province of Hasa on the Gulf. Two years later, during World War I, he signed a treaty with Great Britain, which recognized him as the ruler of Nejd, Hasa, Katif and Jubail and granted him a monthly subsidy of 5,000 pounds sterling. In 1919, Saudi expansion reached Hedjaz. It was then that Ibn Saud defeated at Turabah the ruler of Hedjaz, Hussein, the head of a rival family. In 1921 Ibn Saud occupied the province of Asir and the next year seized Jebel Shammar.

In 1924 he launched a new and final campaign in the western part of the peninsula, directed against Hussein, who had proclaimed himself the King of Mecca. Facing the steady Saudi advance, Hussein abandoned the sacred city to Ibn Saud. Hussein's son Ali found refuge in Jidda together with his army, but he, too, surrendered in December 1925. At the same time, the Wahabi army occupied Medina and Yanbu. Ali abdicated and went to Iraq, where he died in 1934.

Abdel Aziz Ibn Saud, who had been earlier recognized as the Sultan of Nejd by the Council of Ulems and Emirs in keeping with Wahabi tradition, proclaimed himself King of Hedjaz on January 8, 1926. He united Hedjaz and Nejd in 1927 and assumed the title of King of Hedjaz, Nejd and Their Dependencies. As such, he was recognized by Great Britain, which at that time was still the most influential power in the area.

On September 18, 1932, the conqueror Ibn Saud proclaimed himself the King of Saudi Arabia and appointed his son Saud his Heir Apparent. A year later, he settled in a lightning campaign frontier differences with North Yemen and under the Treaty of Taif, signed on May 20, 1934 (see under the Arab Republic of Yemen), annexed the Asir region.

In spite of the situation in Palestine and the British support of Hussein's sons in Transjordan and Iraq, the newly created Saudi state established a *modus vivendi* with British colonialism on the peninsula, which undoubtedly helped contain the Saudi designs against some of the small Gulf Emirates which were tied to Great Britain by treaties of protection.

The new state gradually overcame the initial opposition that its formation had provoked in some Arab countries. In 1936 it formalized its relations with Egypt and still in the 1930s initiated its rapprochement with the United States. Confronted with economic problems as well as with a drop in the number of pilgrims making the annual *hadj*—the Moslem pilgrimage to the sacred places in Mecca and Medina—Ibn Saud granted the first petroleum concession to Standard Oil of California for approximately 100,000 dollars in gold. Together with Esso, Texaco and Mobil Oil, Standard Oil formed the Arabian-American Oil Company—ARAMCO. The period following the granting of that concession was marked by competition between British and American interests to gain decisive influence with the Saudi dynasty. During World War II, Great Britain spent more than 17 million dollars on sustaining the Saudi monarchy, which was ailing under the impact of the temporary suspension of the *hadj* and a drop in petroleum production caused by the war.

In 1943, the United States sent a military mission to Saudi Arabia and construction began of air force facilities at Dhahran, near the Gulf coast and the petroleum fields, which were eventually transformed into an air base of vital strategic interest for the United States at that time. In February 1945, Ibn Saud met with President Roosevelt on board the U.S.S. Quincy in the Red Sea. By 1947, Saudi Arabia had received more than 100 million dollars from the United States.

Two years later, an old dispute with Abu Dhabi over a group of oases at Buraimi, which that emirate shared with Oman, accentuated by petroleum finds, served as a pretext for the Saudi occupation of one of the small settlements in the Buraimi oases. In this case Abu Dhabi had the support of the British.

In 1950, ARAMCO completed the construction of the Tapline petroleum pipeline leading from the Gulf coast to southern Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea. The pipeline was conceived by the United States as a safe method of supplying its Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean with fuel. The same company built a railway between Damman and Riyadh in 1951. Since then ARAMCO wielded strong influence in the Saudi kingdom and among other demonstrations of sympathy supported Saudi claims to the Buraimi oases, this time in a dispute with Oman. In 1951, the United States received permission for another five years to use its bases in the triangle Dhahran-Al Khobar-Al Aghassia, and Saudi Arabia was included in the Point Four programme of U.S. technical assistance.

Ibn Saud died in 1953 and was succeeded by his son Saud.

Saudi relations with the United States were marked by some friction since 1948, when Washington was actively involved against the Arab cause by its support of the formation of the State of Israel. It seems that during the Roosevelt-Ibn Saud talks on board the U.S.S. Quincy, the problem of Palestine was also discussed and that the President of the United States had given some pledges to the Saudi ruler, in particular the promise to consult the Arabs and the Jews prior to supporting a specific status for Palestine; in exchange, the Saudis offered the United States the right to establish military bases on their territory and a 60-year guarantee on petroleum concessions for ARAMCO. When the first Arab-Israeli conflict broke out, all these pledges and promises became void, but Saudi Arabia did not actively participate in the fighting and merely sent to the area a small military contingent of a symbolic nature.

Under Saud's reign, relations with the United States grew in strength, in spite of some occasional ups and downs. In that period Arab nationalism had reached its apogee following the victory of the Nasserite revolution in Egypt. The revolutionary spirit produced by that victory, to which the peoples of the Arab Peninsula did not remain immune, called for a cautious approach to international problems by the Saudi regime.

In 1954, Washington decided to increase its supply of arms to Saudi Arabia after a visit of Crown Prince Feisal to the United States.

During the invasion of Suez in October 1956, the Saudi dynasty viewed as "generous" the United States position and broke off relations with France and Great Britain. King Saud visited the United States in 1957 and brought his country's alliance with Washington to its highest point. The king, who was received with the greatest pomp, publicly declared his support of the Eisenhower Doctrine, under which the power vacuum existing in the Middle East should be filled by the United States in face of an alleged Soviet threat. In the then prevailing cold-war climate, the anti-Communist orientation, which had already been one of the main features of Saudi policy, grew still stronger.

King Saud agreed with President Eisenhower on an expansion of the area to be used for American military facilities on Saudi territory and in exchange obtained a substantial increase in arms supplies. The Saudi army of some 15,000 men was almost doubled and was equipped with modern artillery and aircraft. In 1958, Saudi Arabia received 25 million dollars in credit for military purchases.

In spite of its historical contradications with the Hashemite dynasty in Jordan, Saud established cooperation with that royal house in 1957 in the face of the growing nationalist sentiments that were making inroads in the Arab monarchies. He offered Jordan Saudi troops to help suppress the rise of popular demonstrations in the Hashemite kingdom.

In 1960, a power struggle broke out inside the Saudi royal family. In spite of the substantial foreign aid he was receiving, King Saud proved to be a poor administrator of the incipient Saudi fortune. His brother and Prime Minister, Crown Prince Feisal, seemed to enjoy American support, since the United States wanted greater efficiency in the running of affairs of the important ally of its interests in the Middle East.

However, in spite of this support, Saud used his influence to oust his brother temporarily from the government in 1960. The king made a tour of the country to seek support from the tribal leaders, who were angered by the cuts Feisal had made in the traditional subsidies to the individual tribes, and at the same time allied himself inside the royal family with some advocates of major changes in the government, among them Prince Tallal.

In 1961 and 1962 Saud went to the United States for medical treatment, Feisal returned to power, and Tallal was forced into exile. In 1962, following the proclamation of a Republic in North Yemen, Feisal's hold on the kingdom was consolidated when he put three of his brothers into key positions—Khaled as the commander of the army, Fahd as Minister of the Interior, and Sultan as Minister of Defence.

In the same year slavery was officially abolished in Saudi Arabia, although subsequently repeated charges were raised that slavery continued to be practised on a minor scale until quite recently. A reform of local administration, carried out in October 1963, divided the country into five provinces and provided for the formation of a Consultative Council in each of them to assist the provincial governors.

In October 1962, Feisal met President John F. Kennedy in Washington in order to discuss mainly the Egyptian presence in North Yemen which was helping to defend the new republic, then under attack by elements trying to restore the overthrown North Yemeni monarchy with Saudi support.

In a letter made public in November of the same year, Kennedy assured Feisal that the United States would aid Saudi Arabia in the case of an armed conflict on its territory. This letter is notable not so much by its re-iteration of the longstanding American support of Saudi Arabia as by the fact that it never mentioned King Saud, thus clearly indicating American support of the heir to the Saudi throne, whom Washington considered its best option for running the kingdom.

Saud tried to retake the reins of power in 1964, hoping to rally the members of the Royal Guard on his side, but Feisal demonstrated his complete control of the armed forces. In November 1964, Saud was formally deposed by a majority of the royal princes and members of the council of religious leaders. Feisal assumed the title of King and his brother flew into exile.

The pro-Western orientation of the new ruler became still more obvious in 1965, when he proposed the formation of an "Islamic Pact" which would combat "all ideologies opposed to Islam". The most conservative governments of the Moslem world were invited to take part in this alliance, which was publicly encouraged by the United States.

In May 1966, Feisal paid an official visit to Washington, during which he had talks with President Lyndon B. Johnson. As a result of this meeting and of the Saudi concern over Nasserite nationalism, which was making inroads in the Arab world, American military aid to Saudi Arabia was again increased. The Saudi military bases at Najran, Tobuk, Warieh and Riyadh were equipped for the first time with Hawk missiles.

During the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, Saudi Arabia suspended its deliveries of crude petroleum to the United States and Great Britain, but maintained its diplomatic relations with both countries. In view of the outcome of that conflict, Egypt had to withdraw from Yemen, the progressive forces in that country were suppressed, and Saudi influence in the Arab Peninsula was greatly strengthened.

In 1969 and 1970, the plan of modernizing the Saudi armed forces continued to be implemented. In that period the Saudis obtained 25 combat aircraft from Great Britain and negotiated with that country a contract worth more than 40 million dollars on reinforcement of the kingdom's anti-aircraft defences. In July 1971, the United States announced that it would supply Saudi Arabia with two squadrons of F-5 fighter-bombers and in the same year France, too, entered this lucrative armaments market with a sale of AMX-30 amphibious armoured vehicles. All in all, between 1965 and 1971, the Saudi kingdom invested approximately a third of its income from petroleum sales in its armed forces and received arms and military equipment worth more than 2,000,000,000 dollars. After the evacuation of the British military bases east of Suez in 1971, the United States consolidated its position in Saudi Arabia, which, on its part, became an important power in the Arab Peninsula.

Its military modernization was also motivated by its powerful Iranian neighbour and the revolutionary development in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

In 1969, Saudi troops invaded South Yemeni territory under the pretext of a frontier dispute, but the actual motivation was the ideological differerences between the Saudi monarchy and the Aden government.

The Arab League acted as a mediator in the conflict and although the hostilities have not ceased in the political sphere, the situation along the common frontier of the two countries stabilized.

In 1970, Saudi Arabia recognized the government of North Yemen, from which the most progressive republican elements had been eliminated and which from then on began to be closely dependent on Saudi financial assistance, which is also being simultaneously extended to the tribes in that neighbouring country as a form of making it still more dependent on the Saudi kingdom.

Domestically, although the rule of the royal family has always been indisputable, occasionally there have been some signs of rebellion against the autocratic government. Thus, a coup d'etat was attempted in 1969, which was the most important manifestation of disaffection in the political sphere that had occured since the formation of the kingdom. According to some sources, the leader of the coup, in which more than 200 persons were implicated, was Colonel Daud Rumieh, the commander of the Dhahran military base. Prior to that movement there had only been some limited strikes by petroleum workers in Dammam. The country had undergone abrupt social changes due to the huge income from petroleum sales, which have altered the basically feudal structures of the country and the way of life of its essentially nomadic population. On the other hand, the petroleum profits have further widened the contradictions deriving from the autocratic form of government.

In the 1970s, the Saudi regime played an important role in American Middle East policy. When the Rogers Plan was devised by Washington as a means of producing a partial settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict, Saudi Arabia served as a spokesman for the Americans in promoting this project among the different Arab countries. After Nasser's death in November 1970 Saudi influence on the new Egyptian government considerably increased; soon that government embraced a policy diametrically opposed to Nasser's nationalism.

In 1971 Saudi Arabia played an active role in assisting Sultan Qabus of Oman in his fight against the Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf. The Irani involvement in the conflict in Oman, requested by Qabus, was in that decade one of the principal sources of uneasiness for the Saudi rulers.

During the Israeli-Egyptian war of October 1973 Feisal joined the embargo placed on petroleum sales to the United States and Holland by the members of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC).

Being an influential member of OAPEC because of its position as the major petroleum producer and exporter in the area and in the world, Saudi Arabia played an important role in the application of the embargo. OAPEC also agreed to cut petroleum production and to raise the price of crude petroleum, both of which moves directly affected the petroleum companies, which, however, let the impact of this situation fall on the consumers by exorbitantly raising their prices and spurring inflation in the Western world.

This situation brought about a period of non-antagonistic differences between Saudi Arabia and the United States government.

The embargo was lifted on March 18, 1974, by a decision in which Saudi Arabia again played an important part.

Immediately thereafter an increase in Saudi petroleum production was announced and since then Saudi Arabia has been playing in the organization of petroleum-exporting countries a role favouring Western interests, backed by its immense oil resources.

In June 1974, President Richard Nixon visited Saudi Arabia, demonstrating by his presence the special American interest in the Saudi monarchy, which soon thereafter received new and important arms supplies.

The United States and Saudi Arabia signed, in January 1975, contracts on a new reinforcement of the Saudi air force at the cost of 675 million dollars. This agreement was supplemented in 1978, with the approval by the U.S. Congress, by the delivery of 60 F-15 aircraft to the Saudis at the approximate cost of 20,000,000 dollars for each plane.

On March 25, 1975, King Feisal was assassinated by a member of the royal family, Emir Feisal ibn Mussaed ibn Abdel Aziz. The Saudi authorities immediately announced that the killing was due to the assassin's mental disorder, but this explanation was subsequently abandoned and the killer, sentenced to death at a secret trial, was beheaded in June of that year. Not much light has been shed on this event, although some sources have insisted on some obscure stories of internal disputes in the royal family or on religious fanaticism as the two most probable explanations of the assassination.

Crown Prince Khaled, who had been officially designated as the successor to the king in 1965, assumed the throne and appointed as Crown Prince his younger brother, Fahd ibn Abdel Aziz.

It is from then on that the most decisively pro-American faction is considered to have asserted itself in the royal family of more than 5,000 members; 250 of them are princes educated for the greater part at American and European universities and favouring the introduction of some changes which would help modernize the socio-economic foundations of the country.

Some sources claim that the power struggle which took place in the wake of Feisal's death split the royal family into three principal clans, with the most powerful group being led by Prince Fahd, who belongs to the Sudeiri clan, which holds the key positions in the kingdom.

The second group is headed by Prince Abdallah ibn Abdel Azia, the commander of the National Guard, a powerful military institution independent of the armed forces and considered to be absolutely loyal to the monarch. According to rumours, during Feisal's reign, Prince Abdallah, who is the brother of the present king, Khaled, and who is supported by the important Shammar tribe, had differences with the present Crown Prince Fahd.

The third group is led by the late King Feisal's son, Prince Saud, who has the support of a minority of relatively liberal young princes favouring a modernization of the regime.

After Feisal's death, power in the country seems to be in the hands of the group led by the Crown Prince, which belongs to the Sudeiri clan and is considered to be pro-American and favouring modernization of the archaic and feudal structures of the Wahabi kingdom.

These internal rivalries, described on many occasions as a conflict between traditionalists and modernists, are actually much more complex than that simple division, since the positions taken by the different groups change according to the given occasion or event, and, moreover, even the alliances established by every clan vary.

Since the ascension to power by King Khaled, a number of cabinet changes have taken place. The most important ones occurred in October 1975, when six new ministries were established and in the endeavour to achieve greater efficiency in the implementation of the economic modernization plans, specialists were given greater participation in the government.

Saudi Arabia has continued its assistance to Egypt, especially after President Sadat had brought his policy into the American orbit. Nevertheless, there is a point of divergence between the two countries with respect to Israel. Saudi Arabia finds unacceptable the explusion of Arabs from the Moslem holy places in Jerusalem, while Egyptian policy has been making ever more concessions to the Zionist state since the 1979 bilateral agreement with Tel Aviv, sponsored by the United States.

Saudi capital is, in fact, one of the mainstays of the Egyptian economy. It is estimated that since 1973 Egypt has received more than 2,000,000,000 dollars to cover the costs of the war fought in that year.

Although it formally acceded to the sanctions against Egypt, approved by the Arab countries following the Camp David agreements, the kingdom continues to be one of the chief supporters of President Sadat's policy.

In November 1979, the counry was shaken by the seizure and occupation of the Great Mosque in Mecca, which once again demonstrated the possibility of internal friction inside the seemingly monolithic regime. The occupiers of Islam's holy place were overwhelmed only after several days of bitter fighting and were simultaneously executed in different parts of the kingdom in January 1980. According to various sources, an elite French commando unit may have taken part in the operation against the occupiers of the Great Mosque.

The political consequences of that act, which had been initially described as having had a purely religious motive, manifested themselves in January 1980, when the commanders-in-chief of the armed forces and other important government officials were replaced. Of particular significance in this respect was the resignation of the Governor of Mecca, Fuad ibn Abdel Aziz, a son of the founder of the Saudi kingdom, Ibn Saud.

The crisis provoked by the seizure of the Great Mosque in Mecca seems to have raised to greater prominence in the government of Prince Sultan, the Minister of Defence, who directed the operations in the holy city.

Some months after those events, Prince Fahd, who for all practical purposes is running the affairs of the Saudi monarchy in view of the frail health of the king, announced that for the first time since the founding of Saudi Arabia the drawing-up of a constitution is being planned, as is the formation of a Consultative Council of 50-70 members, whose work could introduce some changes in the existing autocratic system of government.

Economy: Petroleum is the main source of income for the Saudi economy. It was discovered in 1934 and its exploitation began in 1938 by foreign, mostly American and British, companies. At present, the main petroleum company in the country is the Arabian-American Oil Company—ARAMCO—in which the Saudi state holds a 60% interest and four American companies the remaining 40%. Other foreign companies, including one American and one Japanese, hold concessions on petroleum exploitation in the so-called neutral zone whose petroleum resources Saudi Arabia shares with Kuwait. ARAMCO also owns the country's largest oil refinery at Ras Tanura, which has the daily processing capacity of 500,000 barrels of crude oil and 360,000 barrels of liquid natural gas. Moreover, ARAMCO is the owner of the Trans-Arabian Pipeline—known as Tapline—which runs from the Gulf coast to the Mediterranean Sea over a distance of 1,718 km.

Petroleum profits account for more than 90% of the income of the Saudi state in spite of the huge investments made in other industries.

In 1980, Saudi Arabia produced 495,000,000 metric tons of petroleum, i.e. 16.1% of the total world output and 36.8% of the total production of the member-countries of OPEC—the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries—among which Saudi Arabia is the leader. In that organization it has used its influence, given by the sheer volume of its production, to impose its criteria on OPEC pricing, which in general favours the interests of the multinational corporations. Thus, Saudi production of crude petroleum exceeded 10,000,000 barrels a day in May 1977, but was then cut down to 8,000,000 barrels in November of that year. However, in November 1980 it was once again raised to the daily output of 10,000,000 barrels, basically to offset the reduced supply of crude on the world market due to the drop in Iranian production. It is estimated that the Saudi kingdom has a daily production potential of 13,000 barrels.

Proven petroleum reserves are estimated at 110 billion barrels, i.e., a quarter of the total world reserves. There are 49 known petroleum fields, of which 15 are being exploited. The largest is the Safaniya field, with estimated reserves of 13.5 billion barrels, which makes it the richest land petroleum field in the world.

At the present time, more than 1,500 km of oil pipelines are under construction, the most important of which runs from the Ghawar field to the port of Yanbu on the Red Sea.

Natural gas is found generally alongside petroleum and is being used essentially in the exploitation of petroleum proper. In 1974 a plan was launched of exploiting the natural gas reserves through the construction of five liquefaction plants, which should turn the country into one of the world's foremost exporters of liquefied gas.

Besides the refinery at Ras Tanura, there are four others in operation—at Jidda, Mina al Saud, Khafji and Riyadh—and several more will be built under the 1980-1985 development plan.

American and European companies hold concessions on the exploitation of other mineral resources in the vast Saudi territory. Among the minerals with the greatest potential for commercial exploitation are gypsum, limestone, marble, iron ore and phosphates. Prospecting is also under way for zince, copper, silver and lead.

The fabulous profits from petroleum production have made it possible to put into effect a number of five-year development plans aimed at diversification of the Saudi economy. Under the first of these plans, covering the period 1970 to 1975, investments reached the sum of 56.2 billion rials. The second five-year plan (1975-1980)envisaged investments worth 500 billion rials, but the actual investments reached the sum of 700 billion, mostly spent on the industrial infrastructure and new construction. Nevertheless, the annual economic growth rate was 9.2% below the plan. Under the third five-year plan 1980-1985) 782 billion rials are to be spent, this time mostly on agriculture, non-petroleum industry and mining.

The industrial development of Saudi Arabia is hampered by the country's infrastructure and the shortage of skilled labour. In the course of the first five-year plan period alone, it was necessary to bring in more than half a million foreign workers, which is a large number considering the fact that the country's labour force in 1975 was 1,600,000 persons.

The most ambitious industrial development projects are to be found in the ports of Jubail and Yanbu. A steel plant at Jubail, with the annual capacity of 850,000 tons, is Saudi Arabia's largest plant outside the petroleum industry. Since the 1960s, fertilizers have also been produced and in 1979 their output exceeded 300,000 tons, most of them urea intended for export.

Cement production, which is of key importance for the development projects, was 1,800,000 tons in 1978 and by the end of 1980 a vast increase was envisaged (10,000,000 tons annually), for which purpose new cement mills were built at Jubail, Yanbu, Buraideh, Tabuk and Hofuf.

Other important projects include the construction of ten desalination plants and a steel-producing complex at Dhammam, on the Gulf coast.

Electricity production amounted to 4,500 MW in 1980.

Agriculture and fishing employ 58% of the economically active labour force, although they account for an insignificant part of GNP (1% in 1980). In view of the country's climatic conditions, its hot summers, high degree of evaporation and shortage of water, the area suitable for agricultural exploitation is confined to a few oases in the eastern part of the country and to the hilly region of Asir, which in the past had been also claimed by North Yemen. In 1980, only 0.3% of all Saudi territory was cultivated. The main agricultural products include, according to 1977 FAO figures, 135,000 tons of wheat, 265,000 tons of dates and 310,000 tons of tomatoes. The prospects for 1980 were an increase of irrigated farmland up to 170,000 hectares, and under the third five-year plan major investments are being made in the agricultural sector, mainly to extend the acreage of irrigated land.

The fishing industry produced 184,000 metric tons of fish in 1977, while in the same year livestock production included 170,000 head of cattle and 1,410,000 sheep.

Saudi Arabia has a network of 11,650 km of roads and a 577 km long railway line linking Riyadh and Dhammam. Jidda, Riyadh and Dhahran have international airports and three others are under construction in different parts of the country. The main ports are Jidda and Yanbu on the Red Sea and Dhammam and Ras Tanura on the Gulf, all serving mainly the petroleum trade. In 1978, these Saudi ports handled cargo totalling 20,450,000 tons, excluding petroleum.

Prior to the discovery and exploitation of petroleum, one of the country's important sources of income was the traditional Moslem pilgrimages to Mecca and Medina—the *haj*. Since the 1950s, the annual number of pilgrims has risen from 100,000 to the present 2,000,000. Saudi foreign trade is characterized by a high surplus due to the income from petroleum exports. In 1979, imports amounted to 199.5 billion rials and came mainly from Japan, the United States, France, Italy and Singapore. In the same year, exports reached the value of 69,180 billion rials, going mostly to the United States, Japan, West Germany Great Britain and Italy. The 1978 GNP was 63,310,000,000 dollars, while the Saudi foreign exchange reserves in 1980 amounted to some 17,000,000,000 dollars, a considerable drop from the 32,000,000,000 in 1977. The national currency is the rial, or riyal, whose rate of exchange in September 1980 was 3.31 per U.S. dollar.

Government: Saudi Arabia is an absolute monarchy, headed by King Khaled ibn Abdel Aziz, who also heads the Council of Ministers. Crown Prince Fahd ibn Abdel Aziz is the Vice-Premier, but is considered the actual strongman of the country. Laws are published in the form of edicts and Saudi Arabi is one of the few countries in the world that has no constitution. Other bodies include the Family (Royal) Council and a College of Doctors of Islamic Law, which administers justice in the country. The Council of Ministers is endowed with executive power, administrative duties and financial control, but actual power is wielded by the royal family, which has more than 5,000 members.

Armed forces: The regular armed forces consist of 31,000 men serving in the army, 1,500 men in the navy, and 14,500 men in the air force. In addition, there is a paramilitary National or Royal Guard of more than 20,000 men, as well as other paramilitary groups. The military budget in the last five-year planning period (1975-1980) exceeded 20,000,000,000 dollars.

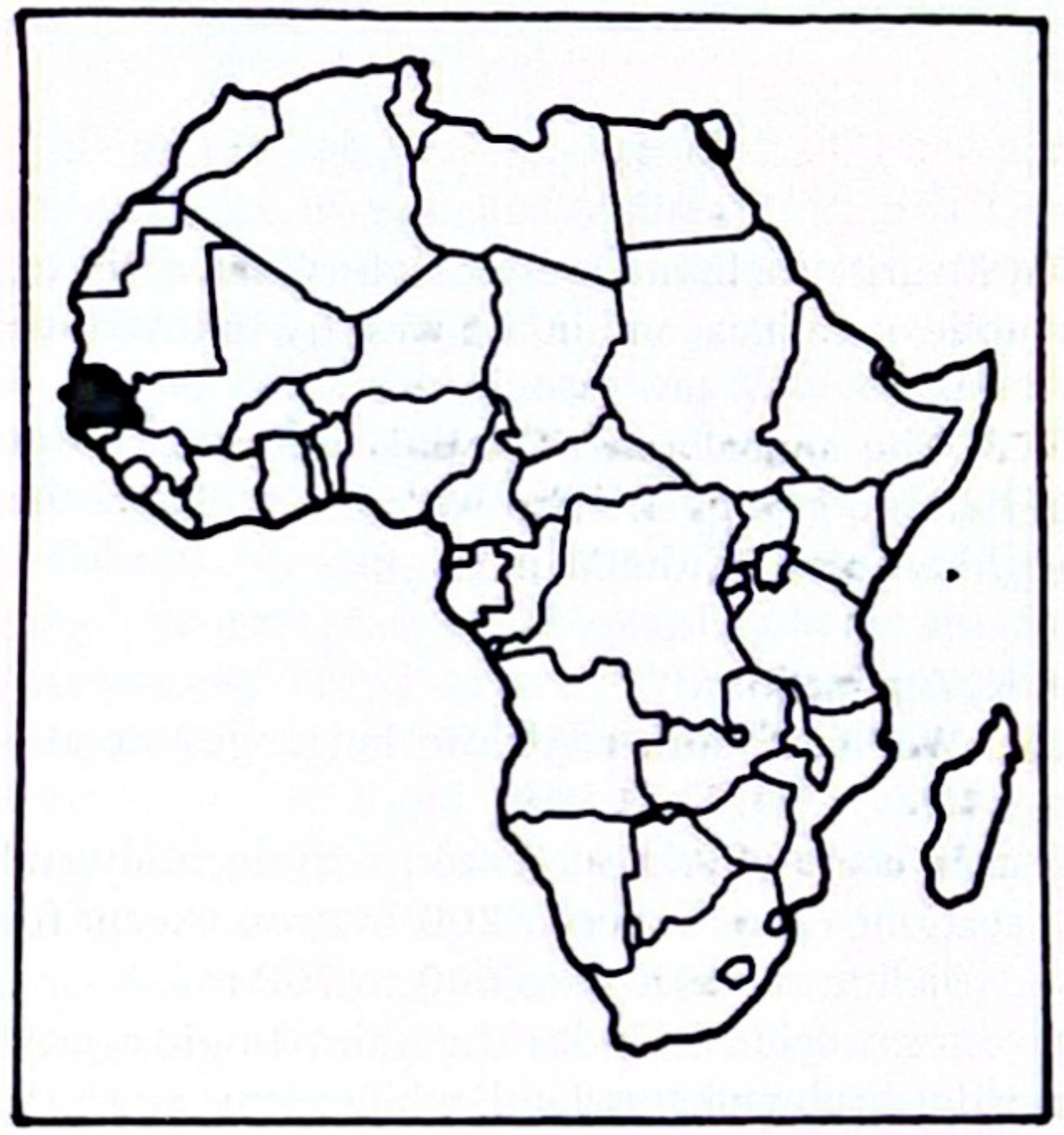
Education: According to 1979 figures, there were 1,300,000 pupils and students attending schools at all levels. The number of university students in 1980 exceeded 43,000 in the country's six universities. Two more university-level schools are under construction. In 1960, a programme was launched of limited education for girls, and even at present the study opportunities for women continue to be seriously limited.

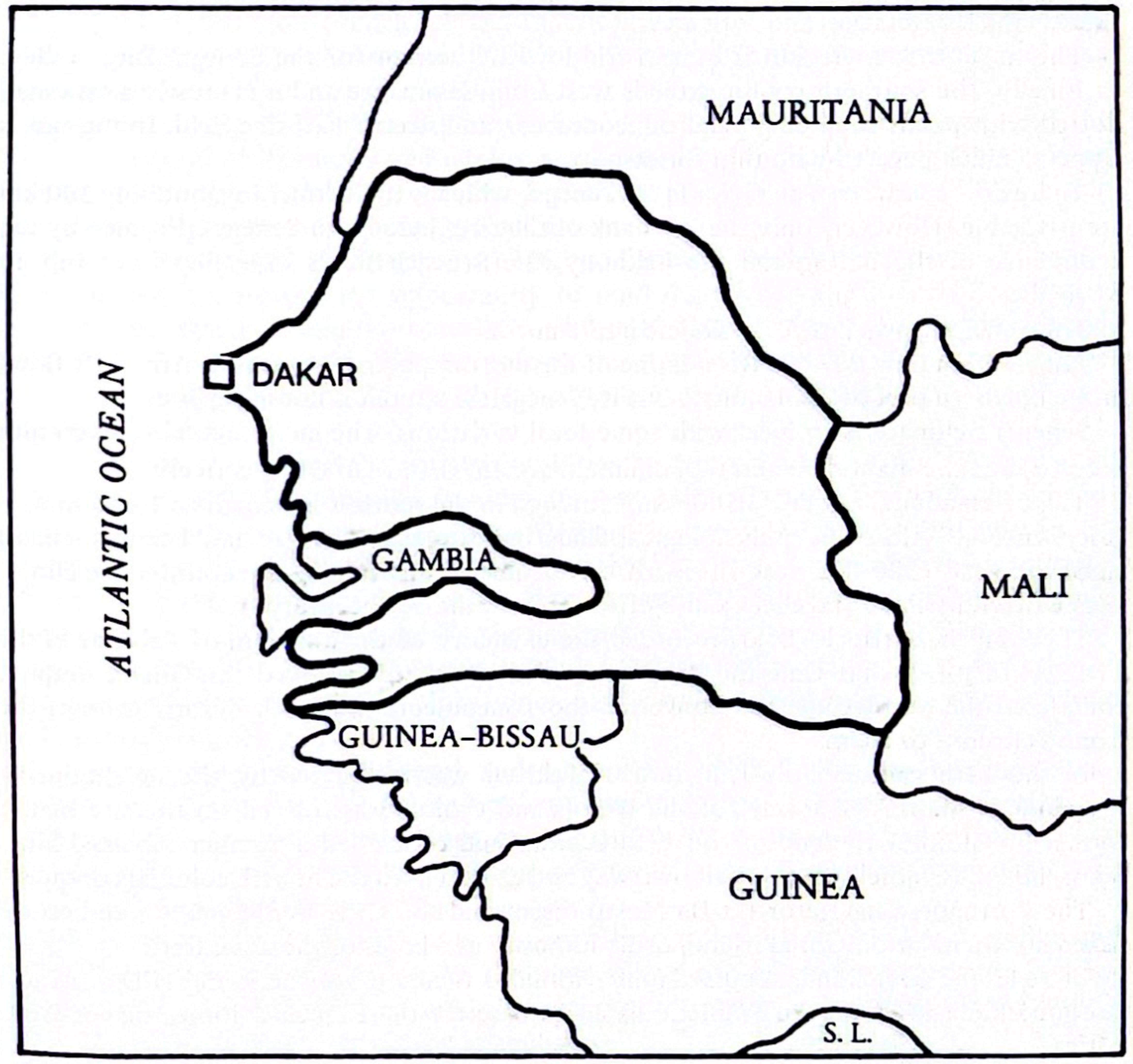
Public health: Its immense petroleum wealth has made it possible for Saudi Arabia to increase the number of doctors from 20 in 1950 to 11,600 in 1978 In that year the country had 67 hospitals with 10,300 beds. Nevertheless, sanitary conditions and medical care continue to be deficient among the nomadic population.

Religion: The population of Saudi Arabia is strictly Moslem. The majority are Sunni Moslems of the Wahabi rite, but in the eastern part of the country there are minority Shi'ite groups. Shi'a Moslems are also represented among the immigrant workers.

Two of Islam's three holiest places are located in Saudi Arabia—Mecca, the holy city with the Kaaba, and Medina, both the destination of pilgrims coming from all the corners of the Islamic world.

SENEGAL





Official name: The Republic of Senegal.
Area: 196,700 sq.km.
Borders: Senegal is bordered in the north by Mauritania, in the south-east by Guinea-Bissau, in the east by Mali, in the south by the Republic of Guinea, and in the west by the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 5,381,000 inhabitants in 1978. The annual rate of population growth was 2.6% in the period 1970-1977. The main ethnic groups are the Wolof, the Serer, the Fulani, the Toucouleur, the Djola, the Sara, the Kole, and the Mandiga.
Capital: Dakar.
Principal towns: Kaolack, Thies, Saint Louis, Ziguinchor.
Languages: French is the official language. Wolof and other African languages are also spoken.
Geography: Senegal is situated on the western coast of Africa. Its territory is sandy and consists mostly of lowlands. The major elevations do not exceed 200 metres, except for the south-east, where the edges of the Fouta Djallon rise as high as 600 to 700 m.

There are three natural regions. The western region includes the Saint Louis coastal area and Dakar. There the vegetation is mostly shrub and grassland, while palms and cork trees grow in the depressions. The northern part of this region is dry, while in its south there is thick vegetation and fruit trees.

The north-eastern region is a semi-arid lowland, except for the Senegal River valley.

Finally, the southern region extends west from Casamance and it is mostly a savannah dotted with palms supplying palm oil, cork trees, and stretches of rice field. In the east is Upper Gambia covered with thin forests.

There are few rivers. The major is the Senegal, which is 1,700 km. long, but only 300 km are navigable. However, only the left bank of the river belongs to Senegal. Formed by the confluence of the Bafing and the Bakhony, the Senegal floods its valley from July to November.

The Senegal flows into Lake Guiers in the north.

The 850 km long Gambia River is one of the most important streams in Africa. It flows in the northern part of the country, but its Senegalese stretch is not navigable.

Senegal's climate is tropical with some local variations. The mean annual temperature is 25°C, but the maximum and the minimum are 45°C and 18°C respectively.

The mean annual rainfall is 500 mm, although in the south it is as high as 1,626 mm.

Brief history: Although archaeological finds indicate that Senegal had been inhabited since the year 1000 B.C., the first written documents mentioning the country are chronicles written by Arab travellers, dating from around the 10th century A.D.

The Arab historian El Bakri recorded the existence of the kingdom of Tekrour in the 11th century. At that time the Berbers invaded the area, destroyed the Ghana Empire, conquered the Moroccans, and converted the Toucouleurs—a French deformation of the name Tekrour—to Islam.

In the 13th century, the Kingdom of Tekrour was conquered by the neighbouring Kingdom of Mali. A new state of the Wolofs and Djolofs was formed on the site of the former kingdom at the end of the 13th century and controlled a number of vassal kingdoms, but these quickly went their own way and existed until the French colonial conquest.

The Portuguese navigator Ga Da Mosto discovered the Cape Verde in 1445 and established a settlement on Goree Island, using it mostly as a base for the slave trade.

In 1645 the Frenchman Louis Gaullier founded a colony on the island N'Dar, which later became a town named Saint Louis and a base for the French colonization of West Africa.

In the 18th century the French established permanent colonies which, with the exception of Goree, were ceded to Great Britain in 1763 and returned to France 20 years later. During the Napoleonic wars these colonies were recaptured by Great Britain, but eventually returned to France in 1814.

Around 1850, the country was divided into several kingdoms, which had been reunited for a short period under Wolof rule.

During the Second French Empire, in 1854, General Faidherbe was appointed Governor of Senegal. He subjugated the Moors, re-established trade with gum arabic, and set up a French protectorate in the area. Faidherbe also founded the Bank of Dakar and organized a native army of mercenaries—"Les Tirailleurs Senegalais"—which was to become a French instrument for the colonization of French West Africa.

Between 1857 and 1864 the French administratively divided the country, confirmed the special status of the four communities, which granted French citizenship to the natives, and began the gradual colonization of the country. They ran into the opposition of the local African tribes, which united under the leadership of Lat Dior and fought the French until 1886, when Dior was killed. Resistance was crushed by the superior French army, and the colonization of the country was completed in 1890.

In 1904, French West Africa was officially proclaimed, with Dakar as its capital.

During World War I, the French colonies in Africa were drawn into the conflict not only by the recruitment of native soldiers to fight in Europe, but also by stepped up colonial exploitation.

Similarly, during World War II thousands of Senegalese fought in Europe, and the Governor General of Dakar, Pierre F. Boisson—who was loyal to the Vichy regime—opposed the British, who tried to land Gaullist troops in Dakar in 1940. However, in 1942, Boisson surrendered French West Africa to De Gaulle.

After the Brazzaville Conference in 1944, the former French colonies were re-named territories and were given the opportunity to send deputies to the French Constituent Assembly. Senegal sent two representatives—Leopold Sedar Senghor and Lamine Gueye. In 1946 the territories were allowed to form Territorial Assemblies with administrative and budgetary powers as well as with the right to send representatives to the French National Assembly.

After World War II, African nationalism began to grow in strength. In 1948, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Mamadou Dia founded the Senegalese Democratic Block, which was later renamed the Senegalese Progressive Union. The struggle for independence further intensified with the establishment in 1957 of the Marxist African Independence Party.

When General Charles de Gaulle returned to power in 1958 to head the Fifth Republic, relations between France and the Territories underwent a change. De Gaulle held a referendum to form the French Community under the leadership of France as an option to immediate independence. Except for Guinea, all the other territories chose to stay within the French Community.

In 1959 Senegal joined with French Sudan to form the Mali Federation, but this federation fell apart due to political differences between the leaders of these two territories.

Senegal was granted independence on August 20, 1960. Leopold Sedar Senghor was elected President and Mamadou Dia became Prime Minister. Both were members of the Senegalese Progressive Union (UPS).

As Senghor added more power to the presidency, the differences between him and Mamadou Dia gained in intensity. In 1962, when he returned from a tour of the socialist countries, Dia was dismissed, accused of leading a movement against Senghor and imprisoned. The office of Prime Minister was abolished.

The electoral victory of the UPS, which captured 80 seats in the National Assembly, provoked violent street demonstrations in which 100 demonstrators were killed and 200 wounded. The UPS had virtually become the only political party in the country.

Beginning in 1965, students and trade unionists stepped up their protests, demanding from the government a more realistic policy, which would be in keeping with national interests. This unrest exploded in 1968, when the students took to the streets, calling for the formation of a new government that would follow the nation's needs and interests. The wave of protest actions produced a government crisis. The government disbanded political and trade union organizations and made some cabinet changes. At the same time certain reforms were put into effect with the object of democratizing political life. Elections, originally scheduled for 1968, were postponed for a year.

In 1969 Senghor was re-elected President. However, the elections were marked by considerable voter abstention in urban areas, where the politically most conscious sectors of the population lived.

The protest continued in spite of a constitutional reform carried out in March 1970, under which the office of Prime Minister was re-established. In March 1971, Senegal's two main student organizations were definitely banned—the Union of Senegalese Students and the Union of Students of Dakar. Ten trade union leaders were tried and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. One of them was Abdoulaye Thiau, the Secretary—General of the National Union of Senegalese Workers (UNTS).

On the occasion of the 13th anniversary of Senegal's independence the government granted a political amnesty, applying to those individuals who had been imprisoned in 1962 on charges of attempting to overthrow the government. Among the amnestied was also the former Prime Minister, Mamadou Dia.

A policy of "Senegalization" of the economy, which the National Council of the UPS introduced in 1973, was an effort to add strength to the native bourgeoisie and to secure its major participation in the country's economy, which was controlled mainly by foreign capital. The government's assistance to the local bourgeoisie was designed to consolidate that class in its support of the government against the people and thereby to assure its permanency in the government under the guise of nationalism.

In 1974 a new political party—the Senegalese Democratic Party of Abdoulaye Wade—was officially formed and legitimized as a liberal opposition.

The relations between the UPS and other Social Democratic parties, which had been gaining momentum since 1973, reached a climax in 1976 with the UPS affiliation with the Socialist International. It was then that the UPS took the name of the Senegalese Socialist Party. At the 1976 congress of the Socialist International Leopold Sedar Senghor was elected Vice-President of that organization.

Together with this process, a new constitution was adopted in Senegal. A semblance of democracy was instituted by the introduction of a three-party system. The supreme law of the country provided for the existence of a liberal democratic party, a socialist democratic party, and a Marxist-Leninist party.

The constitution also placed limits on the democratization process and on the political parties, permitting them to follow only a set political line.

At the Franco-African summit conference in 1977, Senghor praised French policy in Africa and supported the French intervention in the Shaba province of the Congo, in Western Sahara, Chad and elsewhere.

In 1978, after 12 years of one-party rule, presidential and parliamentary elections were held. The Western press agencies played this event up. Three parties ran in the elections—the Senegalese Socialist Party (PSS) with President Senghor as candidate, the Senegalese

Democratic Party, classified as liberal-democratic and led by its Secretary-General Abdoulaye Wade, who was the sole candidate running against Senghor, and the African Independence Party (PAI), classified as Marxist-Leninist, which nominated candidates only for the parliamentary election. Some members of the PAI accused the party leadership of playing into the hands of the government by agreeing to take part in the elections.

When balloting ended, Senghor was re-elected President with 800,882 ballots against his opponent's 169,672. The PSS polled 80% of the total 1,500,000 votes cast, which gave it an 82-seat majority in the National Assembly. However, several days later the Senegalese Democratic Party petitioned the Supreme Court to annul the election results. But this, and other petitions in the same vein, was declared unfounded by the Assembly, where the PSS had a comfortable majority.

In its foreign policy the Senghor government supported the French intervention in Western Sahara and the occupation of that country by Morocco and Mauritiania, while France used her military bases in Senegal for launching her military interventions in Western Sahara and Chad. Similarly, Senegal supported the government of Mobutu Sese Seko during the crisis caused by the rebellion in Shaba province, of Zaire, in the middle of 1978. That conflict broke out during the Franco-African conference in Paris in May of that year, and at the conference, Senegal supported the formation of an inter-African intervention force under French auspices. This proposal was raised by Omar Bongo of Gabon. However, it failed to win sufficient support and the Assembly therefore empowered President Senghor to work out an agreement on this matter, but only the most reactionary African countries supported it.

On the other hand, by the end of 1978, the three-party internal policy of the Senegalese government seemed to be nearing its end, since a new political party is waiting to be legalized once the necessary constitutional amendment is adopted. The Senegalese Republican Movements (MRS) counts on the support of President Senghor, who, in turn, needs the support of a new rightist party. The MRS is led by Boubakar Cueye, the former Secretary of Justice in the defunct Mali Federation and former Vice-President of the Senegal National Assembly. He had seen the President and declared that he expected his approval of the legalization of the MRS.

Yet another party—this time an opposition party, the National Democratic Union (RND) of Sheikh Anta Diop—is also waiting for its legalization.

At the beginning of 1981 President Leopold Sedar Senghor resigned and provisionally left the presidency to Abdou Diouf until elections are held in 1983. Abdou Diouf appointed Habib Thiam Senegal's new Prime Minister.

Economy: Agriculture is pursued on 5,564,000 hectares of the total cultivable area of 19,200,000 hectares by 76% of the economically active population, which in 1974 amounted to 1,700,000 people. The main crops (FAO estimates) are: 92,000 tons of rice, 432,000 tons of millet, 29,000 tons of mangoes, 5,000 tons of palm kernels and 890,000 tons of peanuts (Senegal was Africa's second largest producer of this crop in 1979). It is expected that in the five-year period 1977-1981, peanuts would account for 43.73% of Senegal's total exports. In 1976, the output of sugar cane was 500,000 tons, while the production of gum arabic was 8,000 tons in 1974. Livestock production in recent years included 2,266,000 head of cattle, 1,000,000 sheep, 950,000 goats, 140,000 horses, 120,000 donkeys, and 23,000 camels. In 1975 timber production amounted to 2,745,000 cu.m. The mining industry is dominated by the production of phosphates (1,780,000 tons in 1976, which meant seventh place in the world in that year). It also produces smaller quantities of other minerals and metals. In 1974, the fish catch was 347,000 tons, while in 1975 the merchant fleet had 56 vessels with a total tonnage of 23,261 brt. Industry, which is in the development stage, is practically owned by French capital from the former colonial metropolis. It produced 86,640 tons of wheat flour (1975), 456,000,000 kWh of electric power (1976), 256,000 tons of cement (1973), besides other articles of domestic use and consumption.

In 1973, Senegal's petroleum refining capacity was 600,000 tons, while in the period 1976-1977 the output of fertilizers was 9,000 tons of nitrates and 21,000 tons of phosphates, of which 2,700 and 7,300 tons were exported respectively.

According to available data, the 1977 GNP was 1,980,000,000 dollars. In 1978, the GNP was 1,830,000,000 dollars, and in per capita terms it was 380 and 340 dollars respectively. In 1975, the balance of trade showed a deficit of 119,027,622 dollars, due to 581,420,306 dollars of imports and 462,392,684 dollars of exports. The national budget in that year showed a surplus of 70,000,000 dollars (330,000,000 dollars of income and 260,000,000 dollars of expenditure) and according to World Bank data, Senegal's foreign debt stood at 288,000,000 dollars. Its foreign-exchange reserves in 1977 amounted to 34,300,000 dollars and living costs were 211.5% above the 1970 level. The national currency is the franc CFA, whose rate of exchange was 211.75 per U.S. dollar in January 1979.

Government: Senegal is a republic with the presidential system. The president is elected by direct and secret ballot for a term of five years. The head of state appoints the ministers. The office of Prime Minister was re-instituted in 1970 after a constitutional referendum. Legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, which is elected directly by universal suffrage for a term of five years at the same time as the presidential elections are held.

Armed forces: Senegal's armed forces have a total of 5,500 men. The navy and the air force have 200 men each.

France is Senegal's principal supplier of arms. The 1975 military budget amounted to 6,907,000,000 CFA francs.

Organizations: There are three legitimate political parties: the Senegalese Socialist Party led by Leopold Sedar Senghor, the Senegalese Democratic Party headed by Abdoulaye Wade, and the African Independence Party of Senegal headed by Majhemout Diop.

The principal trade union organization is the official National Centre of Senegalese Workers, founded in 1972 and having 70,000 members. Its leader is Babakar Diagne.

Culture, education and sports: The Negritic theories of ex-President Senghor underlie the cultural development of Senegal. The concept of Negro identity—"Negritude"—in the period of the growth of nationalism on the eve of World War II and in the subsequent years was an effective response of the black Africans, who, exposed to double exploitation, thus expressed their rebellious mood.

Today it is used by the bourgeousie, who cleverly changed its meaning by diluting class contradictions in the abstraction of black consciousness, of "Negritude". The present-day exponents of this concept claim that the Negro is a man endowed with a special human nature, of unique substance. This absurd mystification is being used for the purpose of covering up the existence of a black bourgeoisie, who in some African countries have become the ruling class. In Senegal, students are being inculcated with this theory, especially in the universities.

There is a great literary tradition in Senegal which has produced some outstanding literary personalities many of international renown, such as the Director-General of UNESCO, Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, the progressive novelist, short-story writer and film scenarist Ousman Sembene, the writer and historian Cheik Anta Diop, or the poet Leopold Sedar Senghor.

Education is compulsory for children six to 14 years old, but, because of a lack of school facilities, only about 40% of school-age children do in fact attend school.

In the school term 1976-1977, 311,913 pupils attended primary schools, while the enrolment in secondary schools was 76,107. The student body of the University of Dakar numbered 7,097. A second university is under construction in Saint Louis.

Football is the national sport, although some other sports are also being pursued. Sporting activities are carried on in privately owned facilities, which in fact limits popular, large-scale participation in sport.

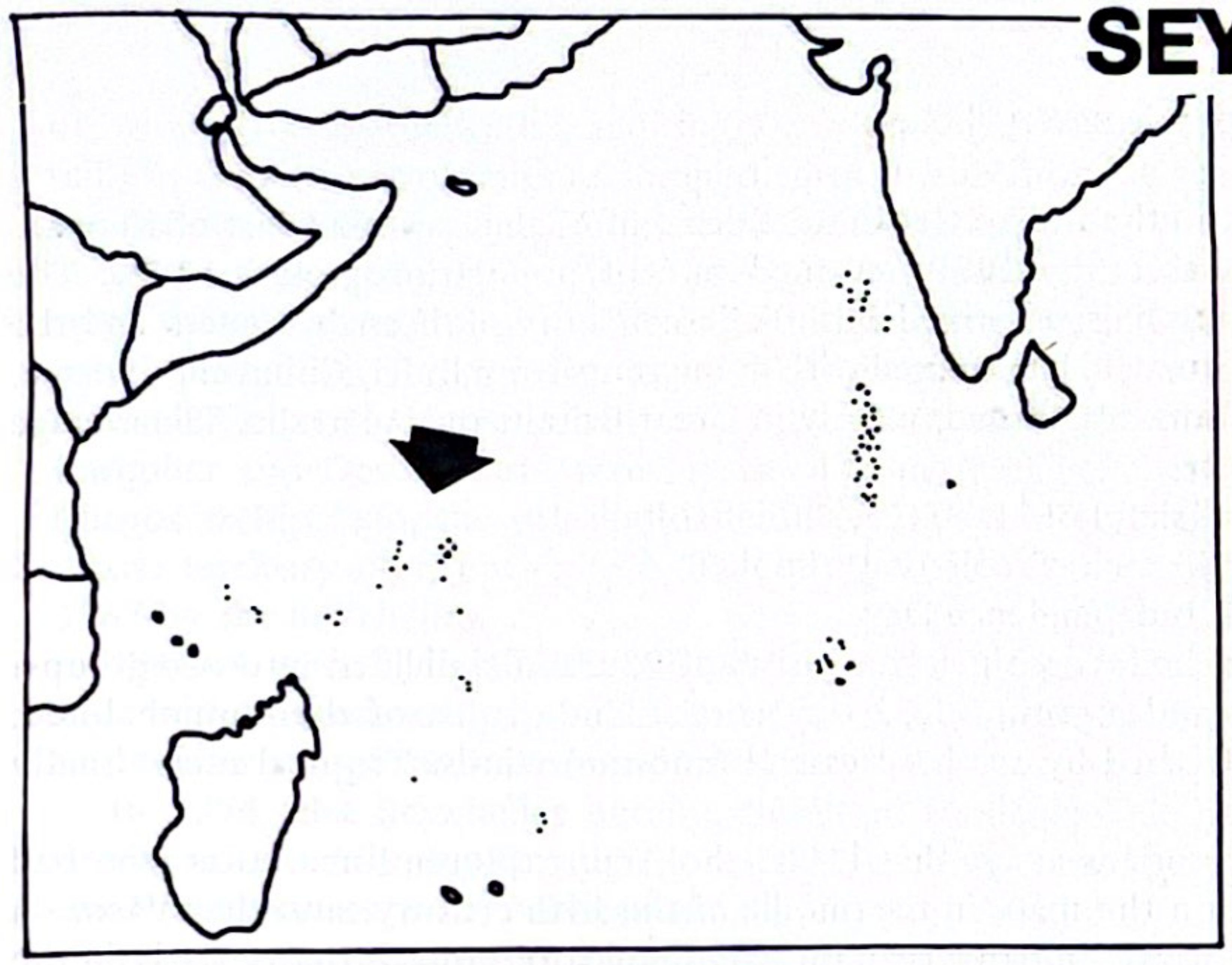
Public health: The state public health service includes social services and certain health benefits to workers and their families, as well as medical aid in maternity hospitals. There are four university hospitals with a total of 2,600 beds, four regional hospitals with a capacity of 600 beds, 32 hospital centres with 950 beds, 51 maternity hospitals with 1,250 beds, and 400 dispensaries. There are 275 doctors in the country, which means that there is one doctor for every 19,567 inhabitants.

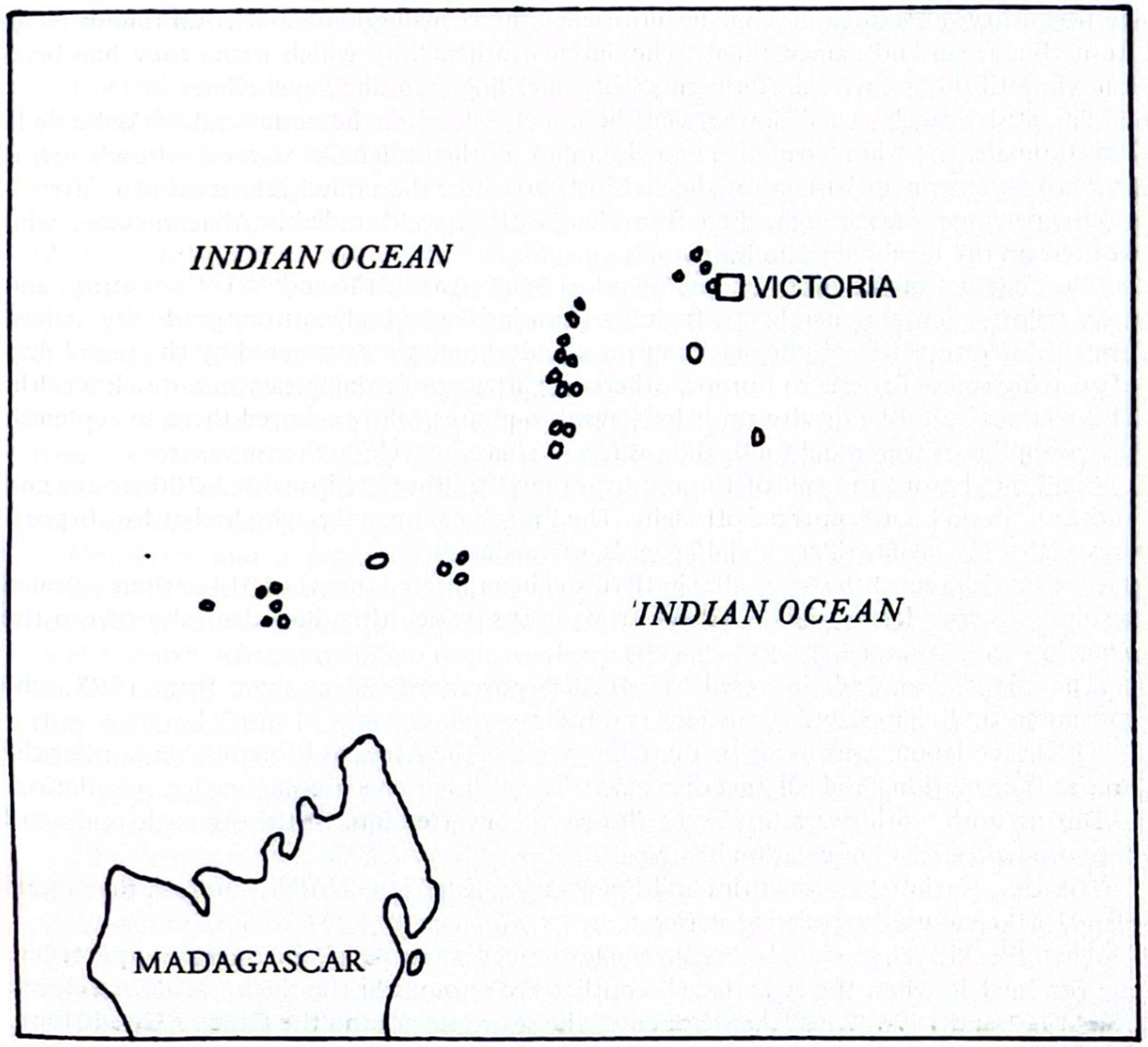
Religion: The majority of the population are Moslems, 10% are Roman Catholics, and 10% profess different African cults and beliefs.

After the completion of the foregoing material, on November 11, 1981, Senegal and Gambia's Presidents signed an agreement, according to which the two countries form the federal state of Senegambia. The new state has joint army and security organs, united economy and currency, and a coordinated foreign policy. Joint security units have been existing since Senegal's intervention in Gambia in summer 1981.

Internal organization of the new state is based on the autonomy of each part of the federation.

SEYCHELLES




INDIAN OCEAN
VICTORIA
INDIAN OCEAN
MADAGASCAR

Official name: The Republic of Seychelles.
Area: 280 sq.km.
Borders: The islands lie in the Indian Ocean north-east of Madagascar and east of Kenya.
Population: 63,000 inhabitants (1979). Annual rate of population growth: 2.5%. The majority of the population is of mixed blood—descendants of French settlers and the native African population, who later mixed with immigrants from India, China and Europe. Some 28,000 Seychelleans live abroad, mainly in Great Britain and Australia. The average life expectancy is 60 years.
Capital: Victoria on the Island of Mahe (15,000 inhabitants).
Languages: English and French. Creole is also spoken.
Public holidays: June 5, Independence Day.
Geography: The Seychelles archipelago consists of 92 islands, divided into two groups: Mahe with 40 islands, and a group of 52 tiny coral islands, most of them uninhabited. The climate is hot, refreshed by sea breezes and monsoon winds. Tropical rains usually fall during the night.
Brief history: Some historians assert that it was the Arab explorer Ibn Batuta who had first placed the islands on the map, in the middle of the 14th century, and that Vasco da Gama discovered them in the Indian Ocean in 1504 thanks to Batuta's maps. Early in the 16th century, a Portuguese expedition reached these small granite and coral islands rising from the ocean and named them "The Seven Brothers", by which name they had been known until the French seized them and began calling them the Seychelles.

The first French expedition arrived there in 1742 under the command of Mahe de la Bourdonnais, the founder of the French empire in the Indian Ocean area, whose name is borne by the principal island of the archipelago, where the capital is located. The French began growing spices brought there from the East Indies and traded in African slaves, who worked on the local plantations.

The first colonists landed on the island of Santa Ana at the end of 18th century, and then sailors, planters, merchants, fugitives from justice and adventurers gradually arrived from France to settle on the neighbouring islands. Some were attracted by the possibility of growing spices for sale to Europe, others sought ways of gaining easy and quick wealth. The coves of the islands also provided havens to pirates, who anchored there to replenish their supplies of water and food, and—as legends have it—to hide their treasures.

Six years before the end of the century, four English warships with 1,200 troops and 166 cannon on board appeared off Mahe. The French commander, who had at his disposal only eight pieces of artillery and 40 guards, surrendered.

The British seized the Seychelles in 1810 and incorporated them in 1814 in their colonial system as dependencies of the Island of Mauritius, which they had also taken from the French.

The islands were administered by a British governor resident there from 1897, who continued trading in slaves with China and India.

This slave labour was used for the same work as the Africans brought there under the French occupation, and all together gave the origin to the present native population.

During both world wars the Seychelles were converted into British strategic posts and were used as telecommunication bases.

The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration--NASA—built on the largest island, Mahe, a satellite-tracking station.

When World War II ended, the Seychelles immediately lost their strategic importance, but regained it when the Arab-Israeli conflict broke out and the Suez Canal was closed from 1967 and 1976. When that happened, the sea route around the Cape of Good Hope, on which the Seychelles lie, acquired once again great strategic importance. More than a million tons of petroleum are shipped through the Indian Ocean, which explains the interest shown by the capitalist powers in that area.

In the mid-1960s, Great Britain secured her links with the Middle East through a network of military communication lines with major bases in Singapore, Mahe, Bahrein and on Cyprus, which was integrated with the system of U.S. communication satellites.

Under a royal decree issued on December 8, 1965, three of the 85 islands—Aldabra, Farquhar and Desbroches—were separated from the Seychelles to form, together with the Chagos archipelago, the so-called British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), a group of islets whose territory does not exceed 500 sq.km, which was administered and governed since 1967 by the Seychelles.

Diego Garcia Island in the Chagos archipelago, which is located in the centre of the Indian Ocean, was ceded by Great Britain to the United States, so that Washington could build there a large nuclear air and naval base.

In 1974, the Seychelles became the stage for large-scale naval exercises by the now defunct Central Treaty Organization—CENTO—an aggressive pact associating Great Britain, the United States, Iran, Pakistan and Turkey.

The Seychelles played an important role in British and American plans to consolidate the economic and military presence of the two powers in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean.

Control of the Seychelles would permit a close surveillance of the busy shipping lanes along the African coast and thus also domination of the natural channel through which petroleum is being carried from the Arabian-Persian Gulf to the West.

The pro-British government then ruling the Seychelles pursued a policy of constant repression of the population. Its special target were supporters of the People's United Party (PUP) of Albert Rene, which maintained close ties with the workers.

Since June 1964, the PUP stressed the necessity of national liberation of the Seychelles and had already been recognized as a national liberation movement by the non-aligned countries. It also succeeded in having the case of the Seychelles placed on the agenda of the U.N. Commission for Decolonialization.

James M. Mancham, a leading member of a small group of businessmen who benefited from tourism on the islands, became the head of the Seychelles Employers and Taxpayers' Association and in the mid-1960s founded the Democratic Party (DP), which opposed the national liberation platform of the PUP.

Mancham and a group of his associates were actually the sole beneficiaries of the islands' colonial status. It permitted them to gain immense profit from the foreign-controlled tourist industry, as well as from the sale of entire islands to such businessmen as the South African diamond magnate Harry Oppenheimer. The hundreds of hotels built on the islands belonged to British, West German or French companies, while the population suffered from hunger, unemployment and lack of medical assistance, and the best cultivable land was the property of 60 absentee landlords.

The people continued to support the PUP of Albert Rene, which had enormous influence in the trade unions and enjoyed great international prestige.

Rene's party won 47.6% of the vote in legislative elections held in April 1974, but because of the British colonial system got only two of the 15 seats.

In the middle of 1974, Mancham went to London in a desperate attempt to prevent the independence of the Seychelles, and the British government agreed that control of the future republic would be given to the DP.

In exchange for the independence he had not demanded, Mancham returned to the

United Kingdom the strategic islands of the British Ocean Territory and back home asserted that the two large parties were in agreement on independence and therefore no elections were necessary.

At midnight on June 28, 1976, the Seychelles were granted independence, which was formal rather than real because the islands continued to depend on London and, moreover, were greedily eyed by Washington for their potential in its Indian Ocean strategy.

After the proclamation of independence, Mancham formed a government with himself as President. Rene was given the post of Prime Minister.

Mancham became a virtual lord of the Seychelles, accumulating under his control all the key posts in the government. He pursued a policy of close relations with the racist regime in South Africa, with Saudi Arabia and the European Economic Community, and expressed his readiness to grant military bases to NATO in the Indian Ocean.

During the first year of independence Mancham spent only four days on the islands, travelling all the time in Europe and the United States.

At the end of 1976, the Seychelles found themselves in a serious economic, political and social situation. More than 15,000 people were unemployed and living costs had gone up 50% in comparison with the previous year.

When the first anniversary of independence was being marked, the people learned that the first elections, set for 1979, would not be called by Mancham. The DP had drawn up a contrary project of constitutional reform, under which the elections were to be postponed until 1984.

On June 5, 1977, the Mancham government was overthrown in a bloodless coup. Rene, who assumed the presidency, re-asserted his adherence to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to which the Seychelles belonged, and outlined the draft of a programme which stressed the necessity of reorganizing the tourist industry on a new basis. He confirmed his intention to combat unemployment, which at that time affected more than a half of the economically active population of the islands.

The Rene government accused Mancham of giving away the country's tourist industry to foreign capitalists and of selling small islands and land to foreign companies for the construction of night-clubs and casinos under the pretext of "attracting tourists".

Because of his policy of redeeming national independence, President Rene brought upon his government the hostility of the reactionary regimes in the region and of the forces which had earlier dominated the Indian Ocean.

In keeping with its nationalist policy, the Seychelles government withdrew from the sphere of influence of Saudi Arabia and other reactionary Arab states.

In April 1978, the country's enemies financed a group of mercenaries, who in coordination with internal anti-government elements would overthrow the new government. The head of this conspiracy was ex-President James Mancham, who had found refuge in Great Britain. The Seychelles security service, which disclosed this fact, arrested a number of individuals involved in the abortive coup. It was planned on the island of Reunion by Mancham's adherents, who recruited 200 French, British and South African mercenaries. The putschists, as reported by official sources, were to sail for the Seychelles from the port of Mombassa, Kenya, in a 290-ton boat.

At a meeting of progressive countries and forces from the south-western part of the Indian Ocean area, held in the Seychelles capital of Victoria in April 1978, President Rene condemned attempts by the United States, France and Great Britain to destabilize the countries of the area for the purpose of turning the Indian Ocean into an arsenal.

In April 1978, a National Union of Workers of the Seychelles Islands was formed as a united trade union organization associating all workers in the country. The decision to

form the Union was adopted at the First Trade Union Congress, held at the end of March of the same year.

As a part of its policy of national development, the government established on June 8, 1978, a Ministry of Economic Development and Planning, which was charged with the task of drawing up guidelines for the country's economic diversification.

In June 1978, the People's United Party changed its name to Progressive Front of the Seychelles People (PFSP). Meanwhile, measures were adopted to spur economic development and to combat anti-socialist elements. Internationally, the Rene government was very active in pursuing its foreign and regional relations in 1978 and 1979, culminating in the personal participation of Rene in the Sixth Summit Conference of Non-Aligned Countries in Havana in 1979. There, the Seychelles President called for a concerted action by Africa's progressive governments to counter imperialist threats and aggressions, particularly in the Indian Ocean area.

On November 16, 1979, less than two months after the Havana summit conference, Albert Rene publicly disclosed the outlines of a plot against his government and imminent plans of an armed intervention against the Seychelles from Durban in South Africa. He also announced that elements involved in the conspiracy had infiltrated the country in order to assassinate him and to liquidate other government officials.

The arrested plotters included a French citizen, Jacques Chevalereau, a technical adviser to the police. Twelve French sailors from the Seychelles patrol boat "Topaze" were taken from the ship in Victoria because of their inolvement with Chevalereau and other persons implicated in the conspiracy, all Seychelles nationals. The government in Paris reacted by recalling all the French sailors from the patrol boat and six other "cooperators" and by suspending its assistance of 40 million rupees, which were to help finance the construction of a cultural centre, a hotel school and other facilities.

To avoid more difficulties, the government in Victoria expelled Chevalereau in February 1980, after he had confessed to his participation in the plot.

The PFSP opened its Extraordinary National Congress in Victoria on February 24, 1980. The session adopted a resolution condemning the militarization of the Indian Ocean by foreign powers under the pretext of the events in Iran and Afghanistan, and calling for the dismantling of all foreign military bases in the region, as well as withdrawal of foreign military forces from Diego Garcia and Mauritius.

The congress also expressed support for a second conference of progressive political parties from the Indian Ocean area, which had already been discussed on the occasion of a visit in Victoria by Paul Beranger, the Secretary—General of the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM).

On internal policy, the congress called in particular for an improvement of the links between the leading bodies and the population, and for a division of responsibility between the organs of the party and of the state. For this purpose, it specified the respective roles to be played by the Front and by the People's Assembly. The members of the Assembly should maintain close ties with the population of their respective constituencies so that they could convey their proposals and views to the party's executive committee, to the government and to the state institutions concerned.

When introducing the 1980 national budget, Rene reported that under a proposed law, every unemployed person who did not receive a pension or other benefit should receive a daily compensation of 20 rupees, in return for which such person should accept work offered to him in accordance with his capacity—construction of sea walls and roads, drainage projects etc. The projects that can be realized in this manner include a six-mile dyke on the eastern coast of Mahe and the construction of another lane on the road linking

Victoria with its airport over a distance of about ten kilometres.

In spite of the incident of November 1979, two financial agreements on cooperation in scientific study in the fields of fisheries and agriculture were signed in Victoria in 1980 by the Seychelles Foreign Minister, Jacques Hodoul, and the French Ambassador, Francis Dore. In the same year, the Seychelles leaders visited many world capitals to conclude important cooperation agreements.

Albert Rene visited New Delhi and signed with Prime Minister Gandhi several economic agreements worth millions of rupees, and in a joint statement the two leaders criticized the Camp David agreements, expressed support of the Democratic Saharoui Arab Republic, condemned apartheid, and supported Namibia's liberation struggle and the struggle for a new international economic order, as well as the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean.

With respect to Afghanistan, the heads of government of India and Seychelles called for guarantees by the countries of the region that extra-regional powers would not be permitted to use their territory for action against Afghanistan as a condition *sine qua non* for the eventual withdrawal of the Soviet military contingent, whose help had been requested by the government in Kabul.

In June 1980, Albert Rene announced that the next five-year plan would place the accent on promotion of investments in the fishing industry, agriculture and light industries. At the same time he spoke in favour of seeking loans, preferentially, from relatively wealthy developing countries where, he said, "We have always found sympathy and understanding for our development plans". In August of the same year, President Rene again sent a letter to the heads of state and government of 21 states bordering on the Indian Ocean, asking for joint action to stop military escalation in the region.

On December 10 and 11, 1980, the PFSP held its second national congress in Victoria, which set the major trends of the country's political, economic and social life, which the party's central committee would put into effect. In addition, the congress gave priority to discussion on the threat posed by the militarization of the Indian Ocean and underlined its solidarity with the national liberation movements and progressive countries throughout the world. One of the resolutions it adopted recalled the proposals the PFSP had made on the demilitarization of the Indian Ocean, and reaffirmed the country's intention to continue the struggle for the abolishment of foreign military bases and the withdrawal of foreign military forces from the region. It condemned the position of some states, which are willing to grant military facilities to foreign powers or to permit such powers to establish military bases on their territory. The congress re-asserted the solidarity of the Seychelles with the national liberation movements, in particular Namibia's SWAPO, the ANC of South Africa, the POLISARIO Front, and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Economy: The economy of the Seychelles is highly agricultural in character. Out of the islands' total area of 37,000 hectares, 17,000 are under cultivation by 17% of the economically active population, which was estimated at 19,827 persons in 1971. They produce primarily cinnamon, copra and coconuts. In livestock production there were, in 1976, 5,000 head of cattle, 20,000 pigs, and 3,000 goats. One major source of export income is guano, of which 5,580 tons were sold abroad in 1976. The light industry that exists produces palm oil and distils essential oils, employing 55% of the labour force. According to available data (1980), the gross national product amounted to 70,000,000 dollars in 1978. The national budget for the fiscal year 1973-1974 ended with a deficit of 500,000 dollars. Exports were valued at 35,000,000 rupees (one U.S. dollar is worth 7 rupees) and imports 191,400,000 rupees. The cost of living in 1977 was 32.4% higher than in 1970. The 1974 gross industrial product amounted to 155,300,000 rupees and is growing at an annual rate of 6.5%.

Government: Executive power is vested in the President, who is assisted by a cabinet of ministers. Legislative power is vested in a National Assembly of 25 members, who are popularly elected for a term of five years, in keeping with a provisional constitution adopted in 1975.

Armed forces: The Seychelles have only a small police force. After the attempted coup in April 1978, the government organized a security organization.

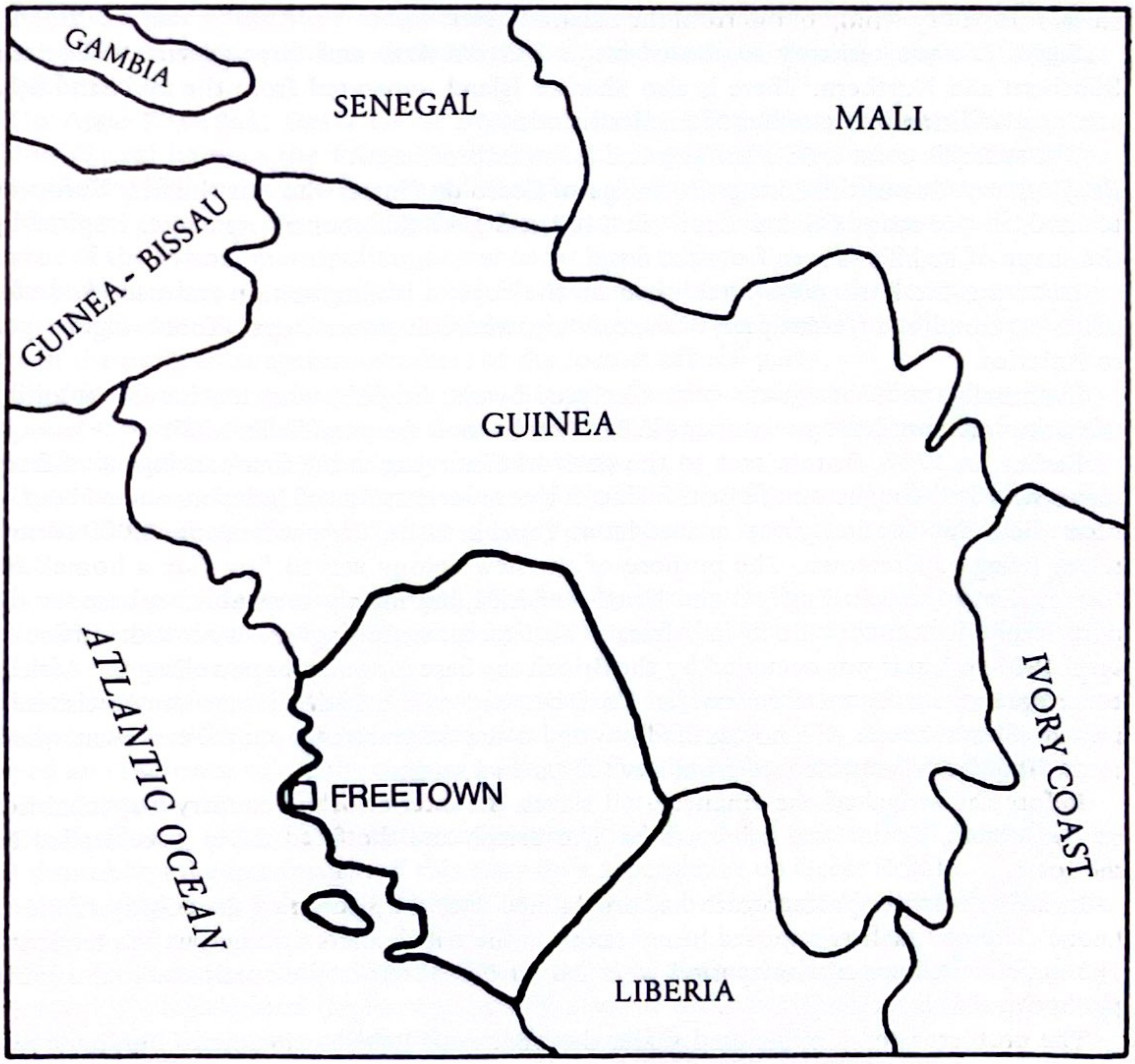
Organizations: The sole political party is the Progressive Force of the Seychelles People.

Education: According to 1975 data, there were 10,337 pupils attending 36 primary schools, 2,640 students attended 13 basic secondary schools, and 352 students attended 5 vocational and technical schools. 40% of the population are illiterate.

Public health: Most of the islands have a good medical service, although in some places it is limited in personnel, depending on the density of the population. The largest hospital is located in Victoria.

Religion: Almost the entire population professes Christian creeds. 90% are Roman Catholics and about 8% are Anglicans.

SIERRA LEONE


GAMBIA
SENEGAL
MALI
GUINEA - BISSAU
GUINEA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
FREETOWN
IVORY COAST
LIBERIA

Official name: The Republic of Sierra Leone.
Area: 71, 740 sq.km.
Borders: In the north and east, Sierra Leone borders on Guinea, in the south-east on Liberia and in the west on the Atlantic Ocean.
Population: 3,470,000 inhabitants in 1977. Ethnically, the majority of the population is formed by the Mende and the Temne; the other groups are the Limbo, the Kuranko, the Susu and some minor tribes. The annual rate of population growth in the period 1970-1974 was 1.5%.
Capital: Freetown (300,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Bo, Makeni, Kenema, Marampa.
Languages: English is the official language. Krio, Mende and Temne are spoken locally.
Public boldiay: April 19, Republic Day.
Geography: Sierra Leone's capital of Freetown is one of the continent's major ports. Otherwise, the country's territory is a mountainous plateau of volcanic origin, which reaches its highest elevation—1,524 m—in the north-east. There are many rivers and smaller streams, including the Great Scarcies, the Rokell, which in its estuary is called the Sierra Leone, the Sulima, and the Moro, a tributary of the Mano, which forms the frontier with Liberia. The climate is tropical with a rainy and a dry season; during the latter, the *harmattan*, a dry wind, blows from the Sahara Desert.

Sierra Leone's territory is divided into a Western Area and three provinces—Eastern, Southern and Northern. There is also Sherbro Island, separated from the mainland by a strait, in addition to a number of smaller islands.

The Atlantic coast is 350 km long and is low in profile.

Brief history: It was the Portuguese navigator Pedro de Cintra, who was the first European to land on the coas of Sierra Leone in 1460 and gave the country its name, inspired by the shape of its hills as seen from the coast.

Later on, the Portuguese established on the coast a trading station and a stockade for slaves captured in different parts of the country, where they were kept before being shipped to America.

Eventually, the Portuguese were displaced by the English, who continued exploiting the slave trade until the government in London banned slave traffic in 1807.

Earlier, in 1787, Britain sent to the coast of Sierra Leone the first contingent of freed slaves who had fought on the British side in the American War of Independence. Many of them died, but another group arrived later. Thus, in 1811, there were some 2,000 former slaves living in Freetown. The purpose of the new colony was to "provide a home" for former slaves freed in England and North America, but mainly to establish a base for the pursuit of "legitimate" trade in Africa. The Freetown Colony survived with difficulty until 1808, when it was occupied by the British as a base for warships patrolling the African coast against continued slave traffic. Until the end of the 19th century the British-held part of Sierra Leone did not extend beyond a few kilometres around Freetown, where some 70,000 Africans escaped from slave ships had settled.

Before the arrival of the emancipated slaves, the interior of the country was inhabited by the Mende, Temne and other tribes. The British and the freed slaves were settled on the coast.

In 1896, a British protectorate was proclaimed over the interior of the colony of Sierra Leone. The colonialists imposed heavy taxes on the tribal chiefs throughout the territory. The major rebellions of that period were led by Bai Bureh in the north and in the south by the Poro secret society.

The protectorate, administered under the traditional British principle of "indirect government", was ruled by tribal chiefs under British control. The Colony of Sierra Leone with its capital in Freetown was administered separately from the protectorate in the interior and its inhabitants (persons of mixed blood, descendants of the freed slaves) had British nationality and a higher standard of education, which established a pronounced division in Sierra Leone's society.

At the end of the 19th century the mulattos held offices in the colonial administration, but at the beginning of the 20th century many of them were replaced by British officials. Their number in the legislative body, where they had only a small representation, was greatly inferior to that of the colonialists.

In order to consolidate their power, the British placed the colony (the area of Freetown and the protectorate (the rest of the territory) under a single administration in 1924.

Weakened after World War II, Britain adopted a more sophisticated racial policy in the administration and was forced to make some political concessions. A new constitution was granted to Sierra Leone in 1945, which permitted the functioning of political parties.

The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was founded in 1951 by Milton Margai and Siaka Stevens, who strove to consolidate the national political forces, but this was found impossible to achieve because of ideological differences and intervention by the colonial administration.

Because a part of the SLPP membership favoured collaboration with the British government, Siaka Stevens withdrew from that party and founded the All People's Congress (APC) in 1960.

On April 27, 1961, Sierra Leone became formally independent of Great Britain and Milton Margai became the Prime Minister of its government. He died in 1964 and was succeeded by his brother and former political rival, Albert Margai, a solicitor, who attempted to institute a system of a single political party and who followed the same policy with respect of the former metropolitan power as his late brother.

In parliamentary elections held in 1967, Stevens, the opposition leader, won the majority and became Prime Minister. However, he faced the problem of holding a very slim edge in the parliament against members of the former official party.

Shortly after having assumed his post, Stevens was deposed by a military coup led by Brigadier-General David Lansana, a close associate of Margai and, as subsequently disclosed, also closely tied to the U.S. Embassy in Freetown.

Only two days later, Lansana was deposed by his own officers and a National Reconstruction Council was formed of seven military commanders, headed by Colonel A.T.Juxon Smith.

A counter-coup carried out on April 18, 1968, by a group of non-commissioned officers, and thus also known as the "sergeants' coup", opened the door for the return of Stevens as Prime Minister.

Internal reaction, allied with foreign interests, mainly American and British, made new attempts to overthrow and assassinate Stevens in 1970 and 1971. However, the army played an important role in the country by supporting the Prime Minister and by frustrating these attempts.

On April 19, 1971, Prime Minister Stevens proclaimed the Republic of Sierra Leone and thus ended the last vestiges of this country's dependence on Great Britain.

General elections were held in May 1973, in which Stevens's APC scored a decisive victory.

The proclamation of the Republic and control of the parliament by the ruling party permitted the accelerated implementation of a set of measures aimed at development of the national economy and of other spheres, the social in particular.

As early as in 1970, the state took over 51% of the extraction of diamonds, one of the country's major export items. National companies were established for trade, insurance and navigation, and a National Commercial Bank was founded, with an initial capital of one million leons, mainly for the purpose of providing financial assistance to peasants. Similarly, a national company was set up for processing timber and manufacturing furniture.

The first five-year plan for the period 1975-1979 was designed to lessen the country's dependence on the outside and on foreign investments, and to mobilize all national resources for the development of Sierra Leone. The plan also provided for closer economic and commercial relations with the socialist countries, which had sent teams of experts to make a geological survey of the country to determine its mineral resources.

As an underdeveloped country, Sierra Leone faces serious problems due to a lack of its own energy resources. It must, therefore, import petroleum in spite of the high prices prevailing on the world market, which has caused growing inflation.

In June 1978, a public referendum was held on the draft of a new constitution, which was approved by 2,152,460 voters against a mere 63,132. The new constitution, the draft of which had been approved earlier by parliament, instituted a one-party system and did away with the post of Prime Minister. It also set a new presidential term of seven years.

In the middle of August 1978, President Stevens announced a reconstruction of his cabinet, in which he included members of the former opposition party, the SLPP, which no longer existed.

Nevertheless, the extreme right continued its agitation, while some groups of workers complained against the effects the rampant inflation had on the real purchasing power of the population.

At the African summit conference in Monrovia in 1979, the Stevens government was granted the right to host the next OAS summit conference in 1980. This involved great expenditure in a year (1979) when Sierra Leone's national budget ended with a deficit of 125 million dollars and when the International Monetary Fund was urging Stevens to devalue by 20% the national currency, the leon, then equivalent to one U.S. dollar.

The national economy got a certain respite in November 1979, when the Marampa iron-ore mine was re-opened. Shut down in 1975 by the U.S. Delco Corporation, Marampa should produce annually about 100,000 tons of iron ore.

The annual OAS summit conference took place in Freetown from July 1 to 4, 1980. In his speeches at the conference, Stevens re-asserted his government's support for the Saharoui people "against foreign colonialism" and claimed that Sierra Leon's non-alignment accepted the premise that "every country has its qualities", including France, for which reason Sierra Leone had decided to take part in the so-called French-African consultations. Similarly, he expressed himself in favour of a regional defence pact, but "without foreign interference". Stevents re-affirmed his differences with the British consortium exploiting Sierra Leone's diamonds, but stated that his ideology was not rigid and therefore "we are liberal, invite foreign capital to invest here, and respect it". As for his domestic policy, Stevens defended the APC's one-party system, stating that the opposition could express itself 'within the party".

As is customary, Siaka Stevens became the Chairman of the OAS for the period 1980-1981. Almost from the very time he assumed this office, he began concerning himself with the criticism raised by conservative governments against the union between Chad and Libya, which provoked other criticism—of himself—by those OAS members who view this matter as being the sole concern of the peoples and governments of Chad and Libya.

Economy: According to the World Bank, the structure of Sierra Leone's economy in 1977 was as follows: agriculture 40%, industry 19% (manufacturing 6%) and services 41%. In 1980, 75% of the country's labour force was employed in agriculture and 15% in industry. The main agricultural products are millet, rice, sorghum, coffee, cocoa, peanuts, sesame seed, mangoes, and coconuts.

The mining industry is quite important and is strongly penetrated by foreign capital—British, United States, South African—especially in the extraction of diamonds and iron ore. In 1979, Sierra Leone produced 316,000 metric carats of diamonds, representing 60% of the country's foreign-exchange earnings that year.

Between 1970 and 1977, Sierra Leone's gross industrial output grew at the average annual rate of 1.9%. In last year exports were worth 127,000,000 dollars, compared with 187,000,000 dollars worth of imports.

According to data published by the U.S. Department of State, the value of Sierra Leone's 1979 exports exceeded 151,000,000 dollars, of which approximately 60,000,000 went to the United States, which in the same year provided the country with economic assistance equivalent to 5,900,000 dollars.

Two years earlier—in 1977—as reported by the World Bank, 96% of Sierra Leone's exports went to the advanced capitalist countries and 4% to developing countries. Its gross national product in 1978 amounted to 690,000,000 dollars in terms of world prices, while in 1977 its external public debt was 190,000,000 dollars and its foreign-exchange reserves 33,000,000 dollars.

Government: Sierra Leone is a republic with a presidential system of government. Under its 1978 constitution, the office of Prime Minister was abolished and a government was formed of 25 ministers with portfolios, 6 ministers of state, 13 parliamentary secretaries, and a Vice-President. The President's term of office is seven years.

Armed forces: Sierra Leone has one infantry battalion and general headquarters, representing a total force of more than 3,000 men, as well as a small volunteer naval force.

The police force has more than 2,000 men, including officers, subalterns and non-commissioned officers and riot police.

Local authorities in the provinces maintain additional police.

Organizations: The 1978 constitution established a one-party regime. The President of the Republic is at the same time the leader of the All People's Congress (APC).

Education: There are 250,848 pupils in Sierra Leone's primary schools, 29,000 students 1,364 teachers in its secondary schools, and 1,732 students and 97 teachers in vocational schools.

In the Normal School there are 879 students and 129 teachers, and in the Superior School 1,119 students and 202 teachers.

Education is not free, but most schools receive assistance from the state and from missionary groups. Moreover, the tuition fees paid by the pupils and students almost completely cover the material costs of the schools.

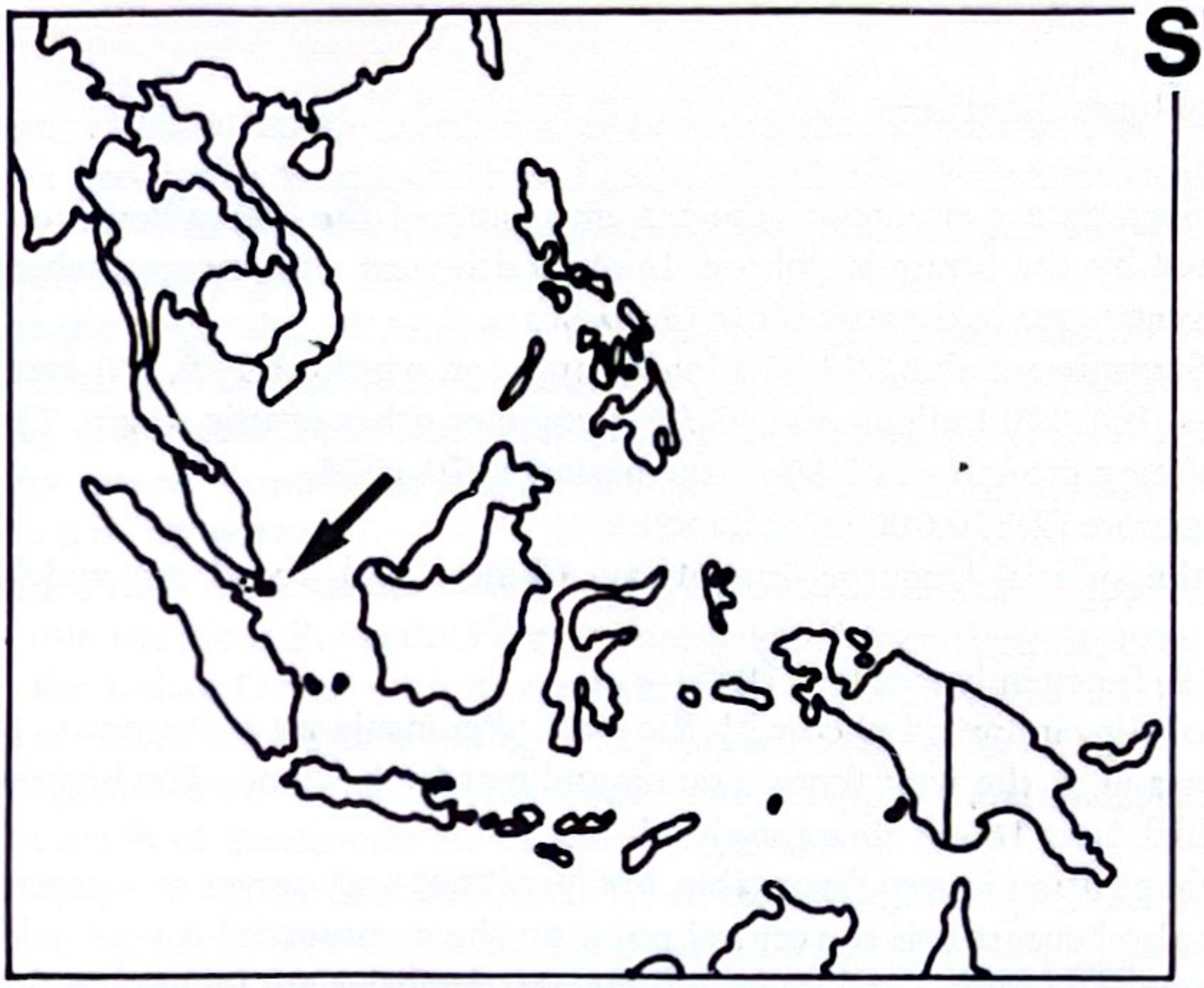
According to United Nations data, illiteracy in Sierra Leone affects some 90% of the adult population.

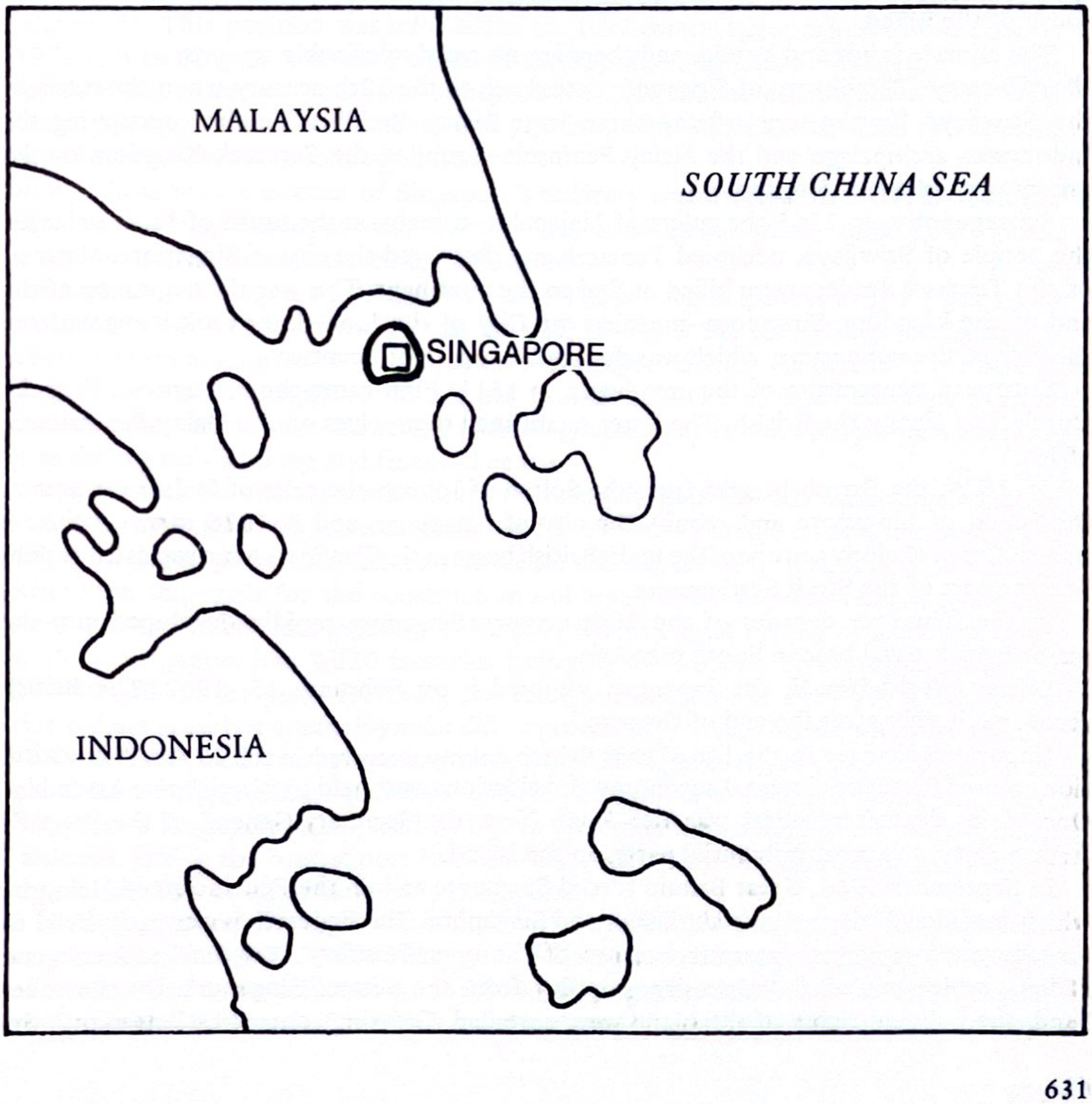
There are two government-operated technical schools and an institution of university level, the Fourah Bay College.

Public health: According to data released by the government in 1978, there was one hospital bed for every 927 inhabitants and one doctor for every 17,114 inhabitants in 1972. Such diseases as smallpox and cholera have been eradicated in Sierra Leone.

Religion: 70% of the population profess animist cults, 25% are Moslems, and approximately 5% are Christians.

SINGAPORE




MALAYSIA
SOUTH CHINA SEA
SINGAPORE
INDONESIA

Official name: The Republic of Singapore.

Area: 581 sq.km.

Borders: The island of Singapore is situated at the extreme south of the Malay Peninsula, from which it is separated by the Strait of Johore. In the south-west is Indonesia, which lies across the Strait of Singapore. In the east is the China Sea.

Population: In 1979, Singapore had 2,370,000 inhabitants, of whom 1,799,100 were Chinese, 355,100 Malays, 161,000 Indians, and 47,500 people of other ethnic origin. The The annual rate of population growth was 1.8% in the period 1970-1974.

Capital: The City of Singapore (2,250,000 inhabitants).

Languages: English is the official language, but Malay, Chinese and Tamil are widely spoken.

Public holidays: August 9, Independence Day (1965).

Geography: The island of Singapore is linked with the Malay Peninsula by a causeway. It is hilly in the south-west and in the west there is sandy and marshy lowland. The highest point is Bukit Timah, which rises 166 m above sea level.

The island's geographic position is very favourable, because it not only serves as a centre for the area's trade, but also because it is the central point on the commercial routes linking Africa, Asia and Europe. The capital and its important port facilities are located in the south of the island.

The climate is hot and humid, and there are no clearly definable seasons.

Brief history: The history of Singapore dates back to the 12th century when the rulers of the Sriwijaya Empire—one of the three large Malay Buddhist empires occupying the Indonesian archipelago and the Malay Peninsula– founded the Temasek Kingdom on the present-day island of Singapore.

Subsequently, in 1365 the rulers of Majapahit--a realm in the south of Java—defeated the people of Sriwijaya, occupied Temasek and destroyed the city of Singapore. Many of of the Temasek leaders were killed or fled to the continent. This was the beginning of the end of the kingdom. Singapore—meaning the City of the Lion—later took its name from the city of the same name, which was destroyed in the 14th century.

European penetration of the area began in 1511. First came the Portuguese, then the Dutch, and finally the British. The latter established themselves on the Malay Peninsula in 1819.

In 1824, the British bought from the Sultan of Johore, the ruler of Malacca, a part of the island of Singapore and rebuilt the city of Singapore, and in 1826 turned it into a British Crown Colony and one of the main British bases in the Far East. Afterwards Singapore became part of the Strait Settlements.

In the first four decades of the 20th century Singapore rapidly developed into the major British naval base in South east Asia.

During World War II, the Japanese occupied it on February 15, 1942. The British recovered it only after the end of the war.

Important changes in the life of that British colony occurred in the 1950s. A constitution granted Singapore internal autonomy and elections were held to a Legislative Assembly. One of its elected members was Lee Kuan Yew, the Secretary-General of the People's Action Party, the most influential party on the island.

In September 1963, Great Britain forced Singapore to join the Federation of Malaysia, which included Malaya, Sarawak, Sabah and Singapore. The Federation was prejudicial to Singapore's commercial interests because of the open hostility between Indonesia and Malaya, which excluded Indonesian shipping from the port of Singapore. On the other hand, the political rights of the island were curtailed. Growing contradications within the country finally led to racial clashes between the Chinese and the Malays, the two largest ethnic groups in Singapore and Malaya. Hundreds of clashes occurred between the two groups, resulting in the death of scores of people and hundreds of wounded. The internal tension steadily grew.

At the beginning of August, 1965, Singapore separated from the Federation of Malaysia, and Great Britain recognized it as an independent state. In 1980, the People's Action Party, led by Lee Kuan Yew, won all 75 legislative seats in the general elections, in which it ran against seven opposition parties. Those were the fourth consecutive elections won by today's ruling party.

Since the defeat of the United States in South-east Asia, Singapore has played an important role for the U.S. Pacific Fleet, whose range of operations has been extended all the way into the Indian Ocean with its acquisition of the military and naval base facilities on Diego Garcia Island, leased to Washington by Great Britain in 1972.

Together with Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia, Singapore forms the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Singapore, which had defended the American military presence in Asia and the Pacific, later adopted a more moderate policy and has been favouring the removal of foreign military bases from the ASEAN countries. At present it pursues a policy of neutrality and non-alignment. This position was reflected in the final communique signed at the close of the 1978 visit to Singapore of the Premier of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Nevertheless, in recent years the policy of the government of Lee Kuan Yew with respect to the question of Kampuchea and relations with Vietnam has been rather close to that of the People's Republic of China.

Economy: Less than a quarter of Singapore's territory is cultivated. In 1978, agriculture, forestry and fishing employed only 1.9% of the total labour force, while 28% of that force were employed in manufacturing industries.

The national currency is the Singapore dollar. The per capita income in 1978 was 3,500 U.S. dollars, which is one of the highest in Asia. On April 30, 1979, Singapore's foreign currency reserves amounted to 11,823,000,000 Singapore dollars. At that time the rate of exchange was 2.1535 Singapore dollars per U.S. dollar. The national currency is fully covered by gold and foreign exchange, and the government favours Singapore's development as the region's banking and financial centre.

The principal import item, petroleum, and the re-export of petroleum derivatives, together with rubber, timber and tin, account for 70% of Singapore's Foreign trade. Singapore is the world's third largest petroleum refiner. Petroleum refining is one of its principal industries, together with shipyards for the construction and repair of ocean-going vessels, the textile industry and the electronics industry. It is Asia's fourth largest builder of merchant ships.

In 1977, Singapore had 2,630 factories (engaging 10 workers or more) employing a total of 60,000. In the years following the economic recession of 1974-1975—when production did not grow but unemployment did—a process of recovery began, when production rose 12% in 1978, and unemployment dropped by 3.6%. In that year, labour began to be imported from other ASEAN countries to reach the number of 100,000 workers in 1979.

The port of Singapore is the world's fourth largest in the volume of the cargo it loads and unloads, and is the biggest port in South-east Asia. It is a strategic commercial centre through which 70% of all of Malaysia's trade passes.

In 1978, Singapore's foreign trade included 29,601,300,000 Singapore dollars worth of imports (c.i.f.) and 22,985,500,000 Singapore dollars worth of exports (f.o.b.), which produced a balance of trade deficit of 6,6015,800,000 Singapore dollars. However, in the same year Singapore's balance of payments showed a surplus of 1,447,400,000 Singapore dollars.

Singapore's principal commercial partners in 1978 were Malaysia, the United States, Japan, and Saudi Arabia, followed in importance by Hong Kong, Australia, the Federal Republic of Germany and Thialand. Singapore is the world centre of the tin and rubber trade. The ordinary budget for the fiscal year 1979-1980 was balanced with 3,884,900,000 Singapore dollars of income and expenditure. The development budget for the same period was planned at 2,560,210,000 Singapore dollars.

Singapore's economically active population in 1978 was 958,949 persons.

Government: Executive power is vested in the President, who is assisted by the Prime Minister and a Council of Ministers, who are accountable to a parliament of 69 members elected by universal suffrage. The constitution enacted in 1959 is still in force. The President is elected for a term of four years, the members of parliament for a term of five years.

Armed forces: Singapore's armed forces have 42,000 men, of whom 35,000 serve in the army, 3,000 in the navy, and 4,000 in the air force. 37,500 men serve in paramilitary forces. Military expenditure amounted to 1,574,000 Singapore dollars in 1980.

Organizations: The currently ruling People's Action Party (PAP) was founded in 1954. Its Secretary General is Lee Kuan Yew. There also exist the Socialist Front, the National Malay Organization-Singapore, the United People's Front and the Workers' Party.

Education: Due to the diversity of Singapore's ethnic groups and to the variety of languages spoken there, it is necessary to provide education in several languages—Chinese, Malay, Tamil and English.

In 1979, education was organized as follows:

	Institutions	Students	Teachers
Primary schools	364	300,398	11,112
Secondary schools	135	179,811	7,828
Vocational schools	12	9,830	654
Universities and colleges	5	20,377	1,685

Educational television has been in operation since 1967 as a means of raising the professional and technical level of teachers. Singapore is considered to be one of the Asian countries with the highest educational standard, since more than 80% of its population above the age of ten years have some type of education.

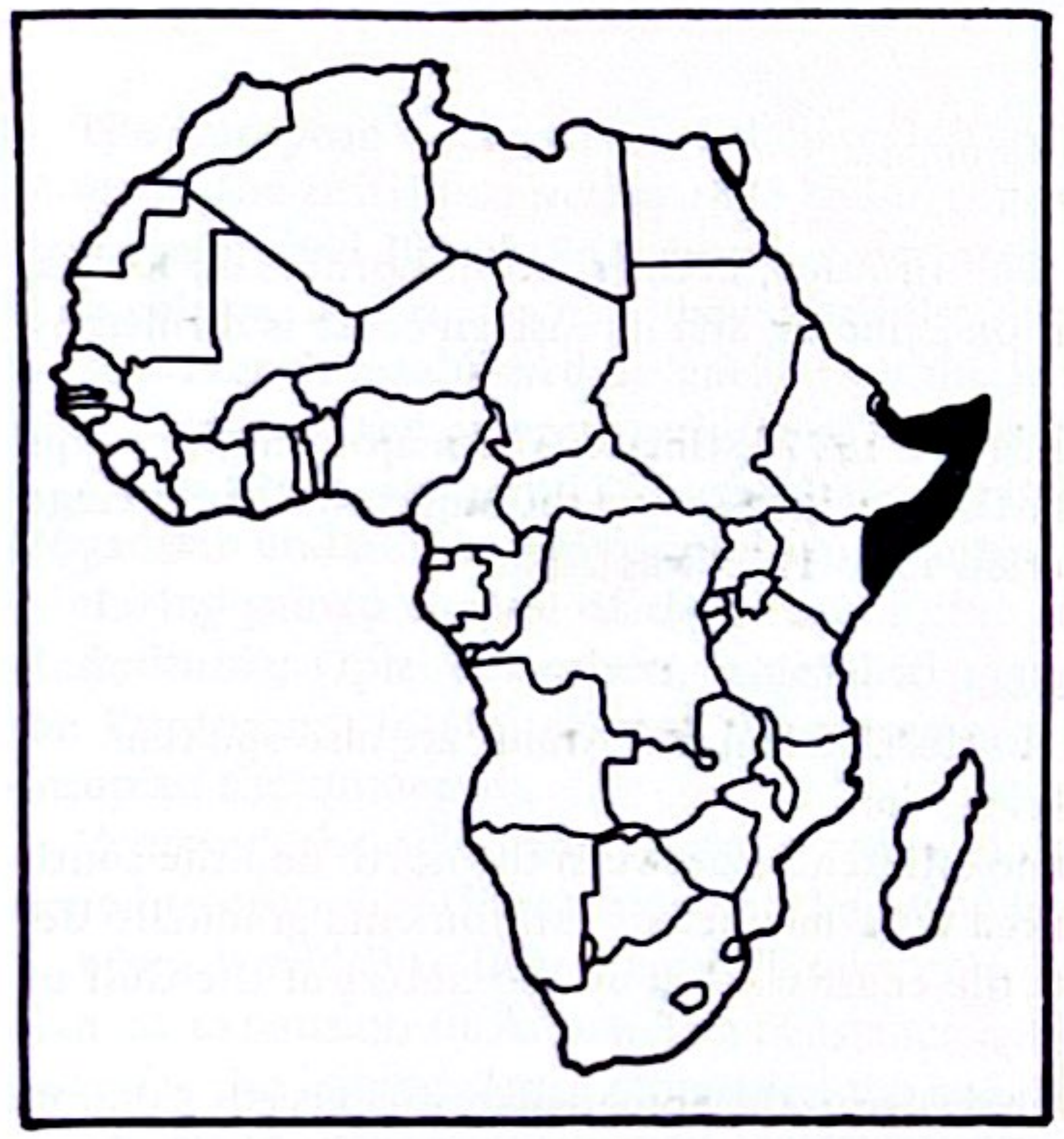
Radio and television programming is in the hands of the state. There are two television channels in operation. In 1979 there were 367,720 television and 425,000 radio receivers in the country.

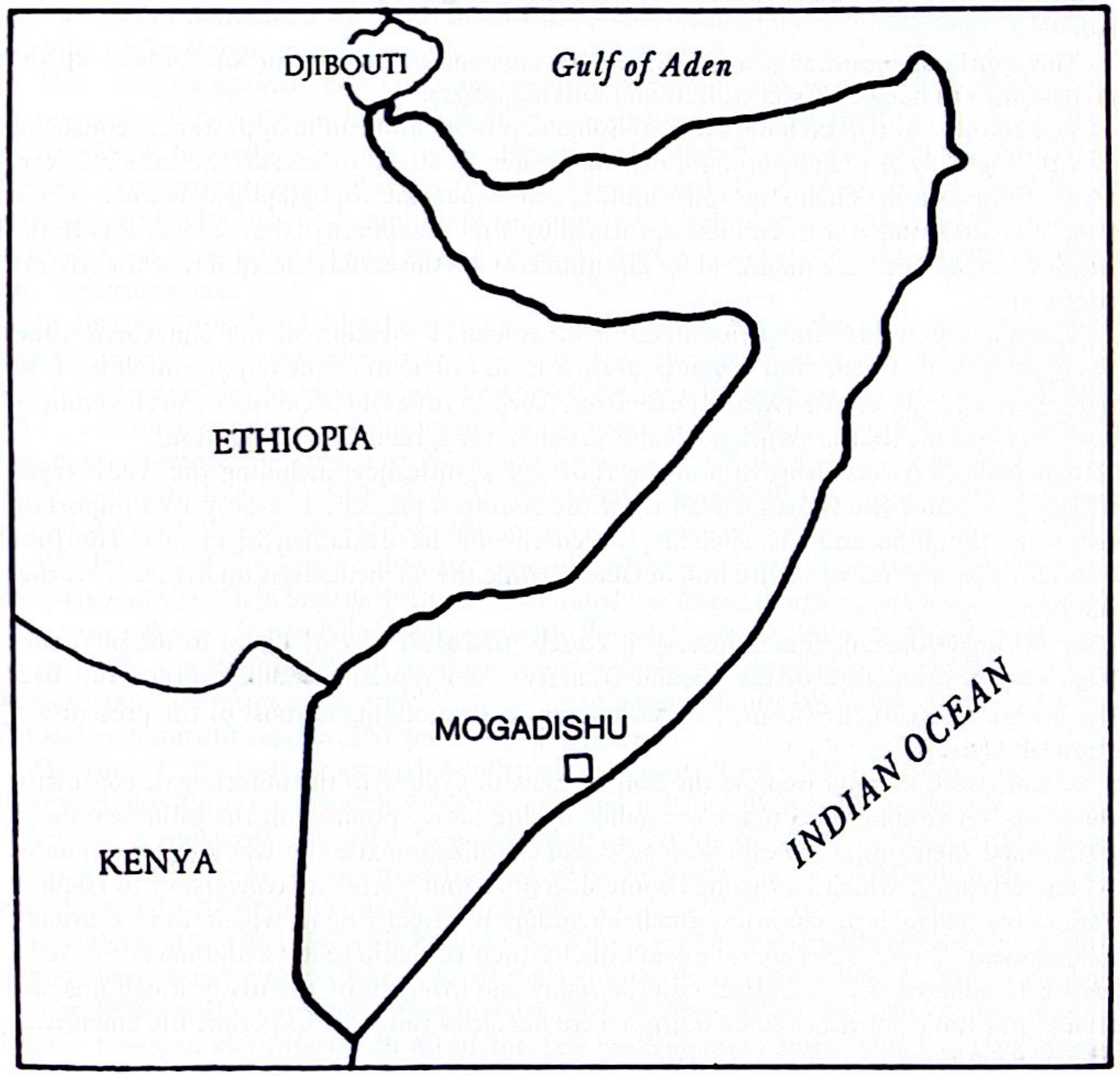
In 1978, 11 periodicals were published with a total circulation of 600,000 copies.

Public health: In 1979, Singapore had 13 state hospitals with a total capacity of 8,485 beds and 12 private hospitals. There were 1,826 doctors and 450 dental surgeons.

Religion: In the field of religion, Singapore's situation is similar to the educational sphere. The diversity of its ethnic communities with their specific customs and traditions results in the parallel existence of various religious beliefs in keeping with the ethnic origin of the believers. Thus, the different creeds include Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Islam, Hinduism, Roman Catholicism, and different Protestant churches.

SOMALIA





Official name: The Democratic Republic of Somalia.
Area: 637,657 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Somalia lies on the Gulf of Aden, in the south it borders on Kenya, in the west on Ethiopia, in the north-west on Djibouti, and its eastern coast is formed by the Indian Ocean.
Population: 3,350,000 inhabitants, according to a 1977 estimate. The major ethnic groups include the Ishaaq, the Hawiye, the Dir, the Daarod, the Sab and the Mijurtein. The average annual rate of population growth in the period 1970-1975 was 2.1%.
Capital: Mogadishu.
Principal towns: Hargeisa, Berbera and Merca.
Languages: Somali is the official language. English, Italian and Arabic are also spoken.
Public holidays: October 21, Day of the Revolution.
Geography: Morphologically, there are some differences between the north and the south of the country. The northern part is marked by a number of escarpments gradually descending from the Galla-Somali plateau to the coast washed by the waters of the Gulf of Aden.

The northern relief, made up of the elevated edge of the Somali plateau, exceeds 2,000 m in altitude, and it is there where we find Somalia's highest point, the 2,408 m high Surud Ad.

The southern mountains were shaped by erosion, which has cut and broken up the plateau into a chaotic cluster of hills and isolated ranges.

The country in the extreme south of Somalia is more uniform in appearance, consisting of a rolling alluvial plane sloping down to the almost straight coast on the Indian Ocean, where there are no anchorage possibilities. An important topographical feature of the Somali coast is the Hafun Peninsula, formed by a mountain range that ends at Ras Hafun which is linked with the mainland by an isthmus and is the easternmostpoint of the African continent.

The climate is extremely hot because of Somalia's location in the equatorial zone. There are few differences in temperatures, seasons or length of the day. Rainfall is of the monsoon type and comes twice a year—from April to June and in October and November—but is very scant, thus presenting a major problem for agricultural production.

None of the rivers rising in Somalia is of any significance, including the Wadi Nogal, which flows into the Indian Ocean from the southern plateau. The only two important rivers are the Juba and the Shebelle, which rise in the Ethiopian highlands. The Juba flows all the way down to the Indian Ocean, while the Shebelle dries up before it reaches the Juba.

Brief history: Ancient Somali history is closely tied with that of Egypt of the pharaohs. Beginning in the period of the Second Dynasty, the Egyptians established their rule over the distant Land of the Scent, an area roughly corresponding to most of the present-day Horn of Africa.

A Chinese fleet appeared off the Somali coast in 1560 with the objective of colonizing the area, but running into brave resistance by the native population the Chinese quickly abandoned their project. Years later a Persian colonization attempt was also beaten back.

The territory, which had gained some degree of unity after its conversion to Islam in 760, was divided into countless small kingdoms of tribal origin, which were mutually independent. These tribes were linked only by their common religion and never formed a nation in spite of their identical ethnic origin. The diversity of the many kingdoms and tribes, and their political fragmentation were obstacles too great to permit the emergence of a true nation.

The European occupation of the area did not begin until the last decades of the 19th century. The British arrived in 1885 and occupied the northern part of the territory, where they established British Somaliland, as well as a narrow strip of land along the frontier of their colony in Kenya, which they called the Northern Frontier District (N.F.D.).

The French established an enclave on the Somali coast in 1886, which they enlarged until it covered the present territory of Djibouti.

Three years later, in 1889, the Italians established themselves in the areas of Brava, Mogadishu and Merca, and formed what was known as Italian Somalia.

Having gained control of the situation, the colonizers turned against the sultanates of Mashultunia, Opia and others, which had signed separate protectorate agreements with the Europeans. In violation of the agreements, the colonialists attacked and militarily occupied the sultanates.

However, the colonialists failed to control the situation completely, and fighting continued to erupt in different parts of the area with greater or lesser success.

When World War II broke out, fascist Italy occupied British Somaliland as a part of its plan of expansion in Africa. The resistance against the Italian fascists opened new prospects for the independence struggle of the peoples in the Horn of Africa.

An Allied offensive launched in 1941 crushed the Italian invaders, and British troops occupied both Somalias until 1949, when the United Nations placed the territory of Italian Somalia under Italian trusteeship.

Their struggle against Fascist Italy spurred the political consciousness of the inhabitants of the colonial possessions in Somalia. The Somali Youth League (SYL) came into being in May 1943, formed by Haji Abdirazak Hussein, Abdullah Osman and Abdullah Issa. The League, with its anti-colonialist platform, rapidly extended its influence throughout the territory and within a year could rely on a powerful popular base. At the same time it worked hard to eliminate tribal prejudices and hostility, to set up workers' organizations on plantations, etc.

In British Somaliland, the League established contacts with the metropolitan power and for several years was the only legitimate native political party. However, at the end of 1947 its leadership decided to ask the United Nations for independence of the colony. This petition caused a break between the League and the British administration, which began to promote the formation of political parties of tribal origin to oppose the SYL. Thus came into being the Hisbia Digil Mirifle (HDM), organized by the Sab, the Association of Abgal Youth, the Somali African Union and many other groups.

The leaders of the League then put into effect another alternative. One of its prominent personalities, Haji Abdirizek Hussein, founded the Great Somalia League in 1951, but this new political party failed to meet with the response its founders had hoped for.

In 1956, a certain degree of autonomy was granted to Italian Somalia, but the Italian administration continued to control the right to vote, military affairs and foreign policy. A local government was formed under Abdullah Issa.

On June 1, 1960, Italy conceded independence to its former colony, while the British unexpectedly did the same with British Somaliland on June 26. A few days later, on July 1, following a plebiscite, the two former colonies merged to form the Somali Republic.

On July 12, the government of the new republic was set up, with Abdullah Osman as President and Ali Shermarke as Prime Minister.

On March 18, 1961, Somalia broke off relations with London and Nairobi after Great Britain had transferred to Kenya its former colony of the Northern Frontier District.

The first post-independence elections were held in Somalia in 1964. The Somali Youth League emerged victorious with 69 of the 124 parliamentary seats. Abdullah Osman was elected President and Abdirazak Haji Hussein became Prime Minister.

All through those years Somalia's policy changed very little. The country suffered from its dependence on the Western powers, from problems of underdevelopment and from administrative corruption.

On January 25, 1968, Shermarke, who had in the meantime succeeded to the presidency, re-established relations with Great Britain and five days later also with Kenya.

The next year, preparations began for new elections in which more than 80 small political parties were vying for the ballots. Under this situation the Somali Youth League, led by Mohammed Haji Ibrahim, was virtually assured of victory. But on October 15 of that year the Acting President, Shermarke, was assassinated.

In the political turmoil which followed, the situation turned from bad to worse until on October 21 the armed forces and the police seized power in the name of a Supreme Revolutionary Council led by their commander, General Mohammed Siad Barre.

The Revolutionary Council government suspended the constitution and dissolved the National Assembly. The most prominent leaders of the SYL and other political parties were detained or prohibited from engaging in political activity.

The new government of Siad Barre began to pursue a progressive policy, adopted some measures favouring the masses of people and succeeded in producing a certain stability in the country.

An abortive coup took place on November 1, 1970, involving the First Vice-President, Major-General Ali Korshel. The culprits were detained.

New attempts to overthrow the government were made in the middle of 1972. Generals Mohammed Aunanshe and Salad Cavaire, accused of the plotting, were tried and executed.

The important measures put into effect between 1969 and 1972 included adopting the Latin alphabet for the Somali language, which until then had only been a spoken one, some labour legislation, and control of the prices of daily necessities.

At the same time, the Somali government began to develop closer relations with the socialist countries, whose assistance, especially that provided by the Soviet Union, was of great help to the backward economy of the country. A large dam began to be built under the direction of Soviet engineers in the south with the dual objective of reducing the tragic effect of droughts on agricultural production, and of generating electric power, which is extremely deficient in Somalia.

However, the Siad Barre government also launched a campaign for Great Somalia, claiming 638,936 sq.km of territory belonging to its neighbours—Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. The argument used was that the population of that territory—mostly nomadic—belonged to ethnic groups of the same origin as those living in Somalia.

Similar problems have emerged in most parts of Africa, due to the division of that continent by the European colonial powers. In order to avoid interminable conflicts, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), of which Somalia is a member, had stipulated in its Charter the inviolabiltiy of and respect for the frontiers inherited by each African state when it became independent.

Frontier incidents with Ethiopia began to occur in 1976, provoked mainly by incursions into Ethiopia's Ogaden region by armed groups of the so-called Liberation Front of Western Somalia and the Somali Liberation Front, organized by the government in Mogadishu. In the same year, the Supreme Revolutionary Council was abolished and the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Somalia was formed and held its constituent congress from June 27 to July 2, 1976.

The incidents with Ethiopia, which was in the midst of a revolutionary process initiated in 1974 with the overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie, grew steadily worse. A meeting took place in 1976 in Aden of representatives of the Ethiopian and Somali governments, which was also attended by leaders of other revolutionary countries, who offered their services as mediators to settle peacefully the frontier conflict. At this meeting Somalia promised not to attack Ethiopia, but in the middle of 1977 regular Somali troops moved into Ogaden to occupy it.

Reacting to the assistance provided by the socialist countries to the Ethiopian revolution, Somalia broke off its relations with Cuba and froze its relations with the Soviet Union and the other socialist states. At the same time it began to establish close ties with the United States and other NATO countries, which supplied the Mogadishu government with large quantities of arms in the subsequent months. Close ties were also established with China and the conservative Arab governments.

Between January 22 and March 14, 1978, the Ethiopian armed forces, with internationalist assistance from Cuba and the Soviet Union, drove the Somali troops out of the Ogaden.

Somalia's internal problems grew ever more acute and on April 9, 1978, Siad Barre himself announced that a conspiracy aimed at his overthrow had been discovered. The conspirators included high army officers and soldiers, many of whom succeeded in escaping to Kenya, but others were arrested. A court sentenced 17 of them to death, while 42 were sentenced to prison for terms ranging from 20 to 30 years.

In subsequent years, Somalia was plagued by grave economic problems due to rising military expenditure and to three years of drought. All through this time its relations with the Western powers grew closer. In August 1980, Washington announced that it would provide Somalia with 45,000,000 dollars of aid in exchange for the use by American armed forces of military installations at Berbera and Mogadishu.

In 1980, Ethiopia and Kenya reported new Somali military incursions into their territory. The government in Addis Ababa in particular announced that a number of battalions of the regular Somali army had penetrated as deep as 300 km into the Ogaden and that Ethiopian forces had captured large quantities of their arms.

On October 21, 1980, President Siad Barre assumed emergency powers, re-activated the Supreme Revolutionary Council, which had been disbanded in 1976, and proclaimed a state of emergency in order to combat what he called "acts of banditry, tribalism and opportunism". Reports from a number of sources spoke of a wave of arrests and dismissals in the administrative apparatus, intended to quell growing discontent.

Several bomb attacks were reported in January 1981, apparently carried out by the Somali Front for National Salvation, set up abroad in 1978 by individuals opposed to the policy pursued by the Barre government.

In April 1981, ten members of the Supreme Revolutionary Council were dismissed, including the Minister of Defence, Mohammed Ali Samantar, and the Minister of National Security, Ahmed Suleiman Abdulle.

Economy: Agriculture is the mainstay of the Somali economy. Of the total area of 62,734,000 hectares, only about 1,000,000 hectares are under cultivation. Forests and woods cover 8,650,000 hectares, pastures used for livestock grazing take up 28,850,000 hectares, and the remaining 24,168,000 hectares are deserts, semi-arid areas and mountains. 80% of the economically active population (i.e., 1,344,000 persons in 1978, according to FAO figures)are nomadic herdsmen.

According to the same FAO figures for 1978, Somalia produced 100,000 tons of maize 130,000 tons of sorghum, 25,000 tons of sesame, 150,000 tons of bananas, and 49,000 tons of sugar. In the same year—as reported by the U.N.—Somalia had 4,000,000 head of cattle, 9,900,000 sheep, 16,400,000 goats, and 5,400,000 camels.

A prolonged drought, lasting from 1978 to 1981, greatly reduced the yields of farm crops and livestock. What industry there is, is light in character and turns out textiles, shoes and tinned food. In 1971, Somalia produced 38,300,000 kWh of electric power. It has commercially exploitable deposits of iron ore, quartz, gypsum, tin and uranium. Several Western petroleum companies are engaged in prospecting for oil.

According to available data, Somalia's GNP in 1977 amounted to about 400,000,000 dollars. The annual per capita income of 110 dollars makes Somalia one of the world's poorest countries. Figures published by the International Monetary Fund show that Somalia's national budget for 1978 ended with a deficit of 67,680,000 dollars, when the fiscal income of 266,880,000 dollars could not cover government expenditure of 334,560,000 dollars. In the same year Somalia's external public debt amounted to 591,000,000 dollars, while the difference between 200,800,000 dollars worth of imports and the 110,240,000 dollars. of exports produced a balance of payments deficit of 90,560,000 dollars. The 1979 cost-of-living index was 116 points higher than the 1970 index. The national currency is the Somali shilling; its rate of exchange in 1980 was 0.16 U.S. dollars.

Government: Somalia has a presidential type of government. Between 1969 and 1976 the top governmental body was the Supreme Revolutionary Council, whose chairman was Mohammed Siad Barre. It was dissolved in 1976, but was reconstituted in 1980. In July 1976, the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Somalia was formed and its Political Bureau is the supreme body of control in the country. The head of state is at the same time the Secretary-General of the party. A new constitution was adopted in 1979, and elections were held on its basis in December of the same year to choose 127 members of a People's Assembly.

Armed forces: The size of Somalia's regular armed forces was estimated in July 1979 at 46,500 men, 45,000 of them serving in the army, 500 in the navy, and 1,000 in the air force. Paramilitary forces are estimated to number 29,500 men, while the militia has some 20,000 (unofficial data). Somalia's main suppliers of arms are at present the United States, other NATO countries, China and Saudi Arabia.

Organizations: The only legitimate political party in the country is the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Somalia, whose Secretary-General is Mohammed Siad Barre. All political organizations were abolished in 1969. There is also a Federation of Somali Trade Unions, which was founded in 1977.

Culture, education and sports: The most frequent cultural expressions in Somalia are poetry, traditional folk dances and songs. Poetry holds a distinguished place in Somali art, while traditional dancing is extremely popular. The theatre was introduced in 1950 and since then has gained many supporters. The principal cultural centres in the country are the National Theatre and the Garesa Museum.

After the present government had come to power, Arabic and English were replaced by Somali as the language of instruction at schools. But since there was no written form of the language instruction in Somali was introduced subsequently, in 1972.

In the same year, private schools were nationalized. The government promoted a literacy campaign and reported that by 1978 the number of illiterate people had been reduced to 25%. Other sources question this figure, pointing to difficulties encountered in this campaign due to a lack of teachers and the nomadic character of the majority of the population.

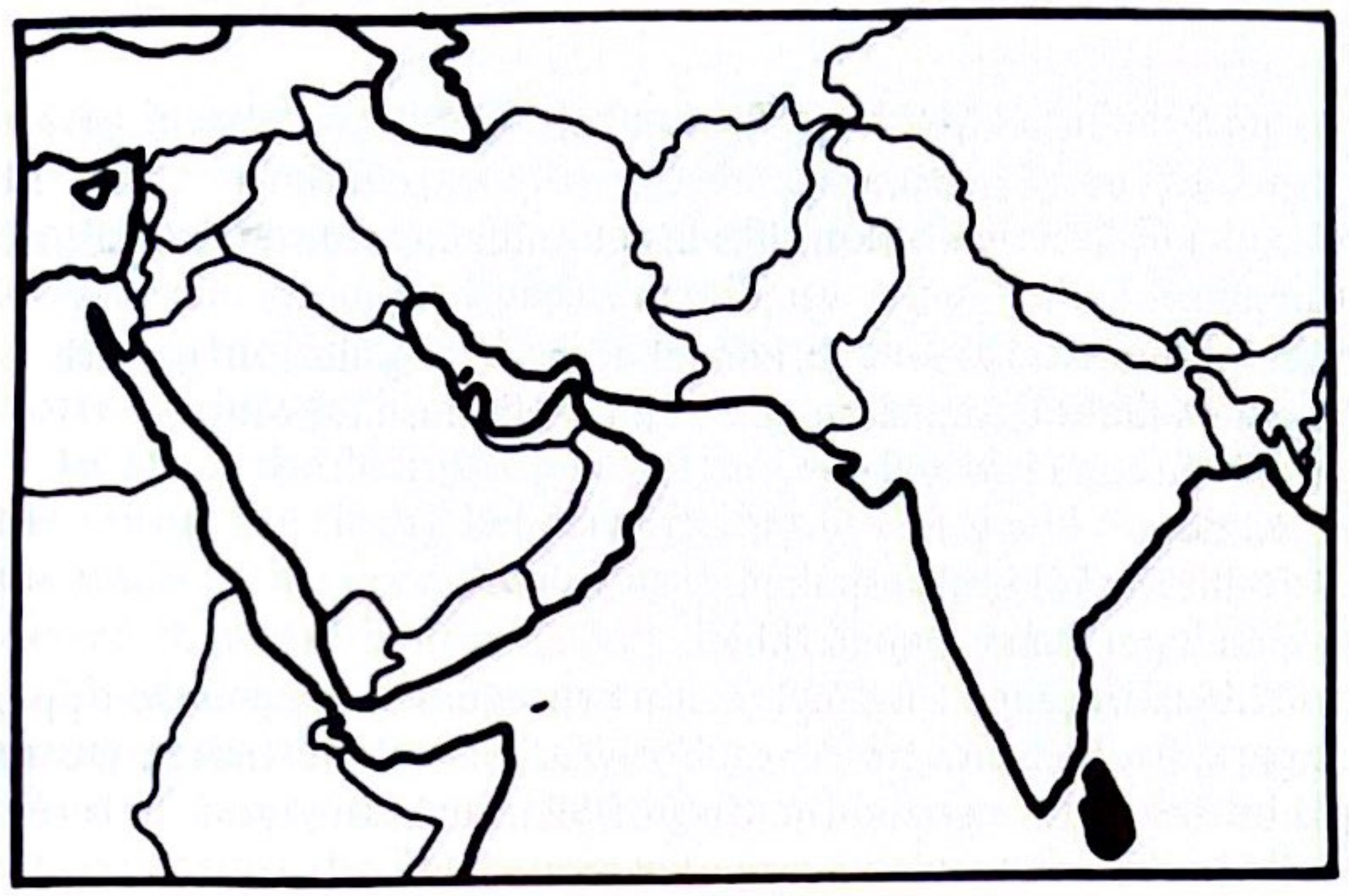
According to official data concerning the school year 1975-1976, there were 197,706 pupils and 4,281 teachers in primary schools, 7,046 students and 572 teachers in secondary schools, 2,246 students in vocational and teacher-training schools, and some 2,000 in technical schools and institutions of higher learning. Somalia's only university is in Mogadishu.

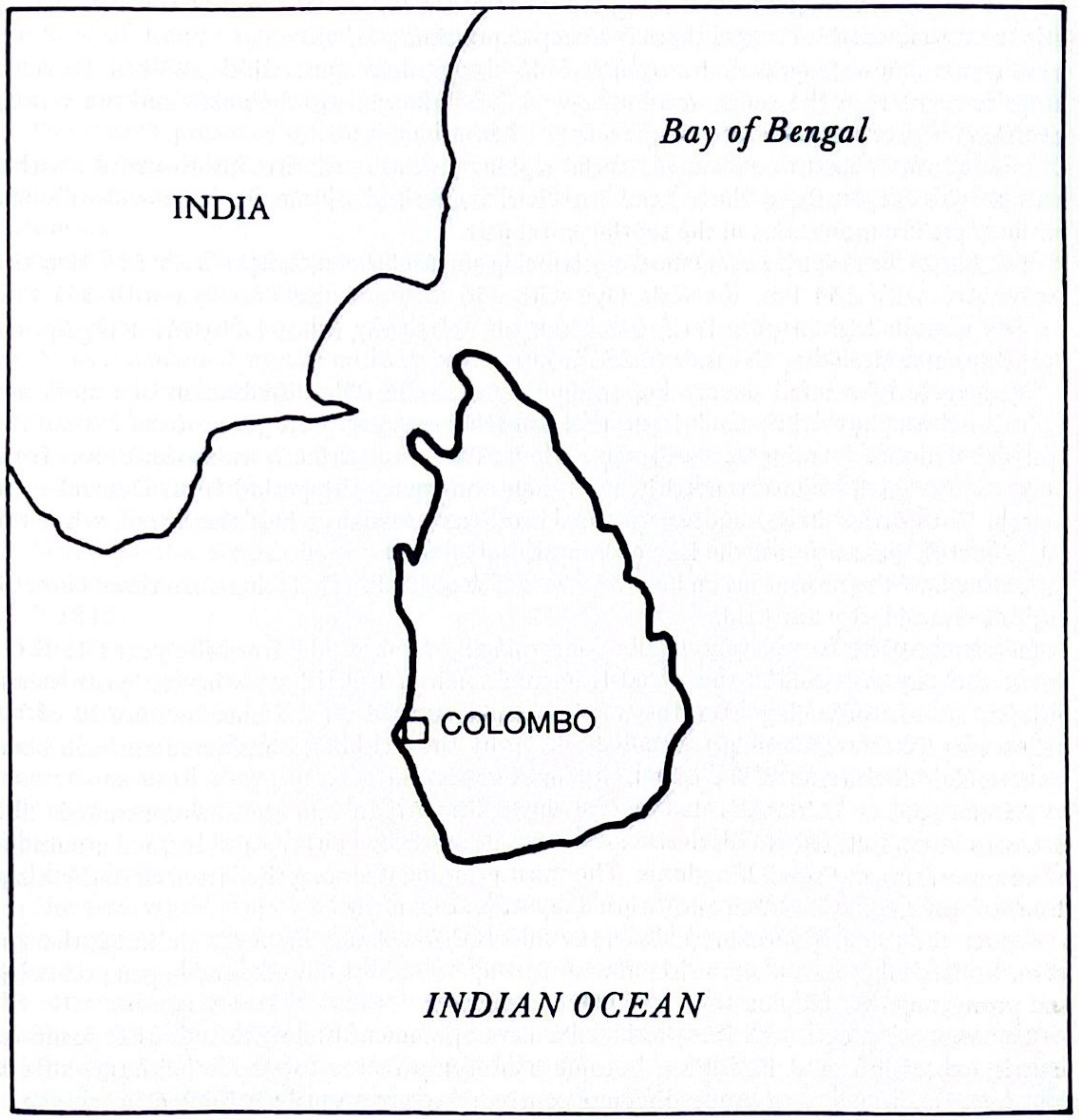
The most popular sport is football, but boxing and athletics are also pursued.

Public health: There is no national system of social security in Somalia, but medical care in state hospitals is free. There is a great lack of medical-care centres and medical personnel. According to 1978 estimates, there is one doctor for every 25,000 inhabitants and one hospital bed for every 850 inhabitants.

Religion: The majority of the population are Moslems. A very small minority professes Roman Catholicism.

SRI LANKA




Bay of Bengal
INDIA
COLOMBO
INDIAN OCEAN

Official name: The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.
Area: 65,610 sq.km.
Borders: The island of Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) lies in the Indian Ocean 80 km south-east of the Indian subcontinent.
Population: 14,781,000 inhabitants in 1979. The annual rate of population growth is 1.6%. The principal ethnic groups are the Sinhalese, the Tamils, Hindus and Moros.
Capital: Colombo (616,000 inhabitants in 1979).
Principal towns: Jaffna and Kandy.
Languages: Sinhalese and Tamil. English is also spoken.
Public holidays: February 4, Independence Day (1948).
Geography: The island resembles in shape a triangle with two equal sides, whose upper point is aimed at the Indian subcontinent. Its coasts are washed by the Indian Ocean between the Bay of Bengal in the north-east and the Gulf of Manaar in the west. It is separated from India by the Palk Strait.

The continental shelf surrounding the island is not deeper than 66 m, although farther out from its territorial waters there is a deep depression.

The maximum length of the country is 434 km, its maximum width 225 km. Its coast is quite regular; in the south and in the west it is low, while in the north and the east its profile is higher and there are many reefs.

The country has three distinct natural regions. In the north are limestone hills with a number of deep valleys, the central part is characterized by small plains and hillocks, while there are mountains in the south-central part.

Sri Lanka has many rivers, the longest being the Mahaveli (Ganga) with 334 km, the Aruvi Aru with 164 km, the Kala Oya with 156 km, and the Yan Oya with 151 km.

The island's highest peak is the Pidurutalagala (2,351 m), followed by Mt. Kirigalpotta 2,390 m) and Mt. Totapalakanda (2,385 m).

The cycle of rainfall is very important for Sri Lanka. The distribution of rain is not uniform throughout the island. Its central and south-western parts get more of it than the rest. The monsoon rains come in two seasons. The south-western monsoon blows from May to October, while the north-eastern monsoon covers the period from December to March. The former brings more rain since it crosses a vast stretch of the ocean, while the latter merely passes across the Bay of Bengal.

Because of the monsoons and some factors of the island's relief, there are three climatic regions—humid, dry and arid.

Brief history: The first historical data concerning Sri Lanka come from the year 543 B.C., when the Aryans reached the island from the north of India. It was in that year, when Vijaya, the son of a king from the north of India, arrived on the island with 700 of his followers. After overcoming resistance put up by the Yakkhas, considered to have been the original inhabitants of the island, the invaders settled there.

After the first colonziers had settled down, the Aryan immigration continued. The newcomers established themselves in different parts of the country and formed a number of communities and small kingdoms. The most prominent among the latter were the kingdoms of Sohana in the south and Anuradhapura in the north.

Under the rule of Devanampitissa (307-267 B.C.) in Anuradhapura, Mahinda, the son of an Indian king, arrived on the island with a group of Buddhist monks and began preaching and promoting that religion throughout the country.

The expansion of Buddhism produced a development of literature and other forms of artistic expression, and Buddhism became a unifying factor for the inhabitants of the country. The kingdom of Anuradhapura continued to grow until the 10th century, when it was invaded by the Cholas coming from southern India. This marked the beginning of a period of instability, as other invaders, such as the Pandyas, stormed it, provoking frequent battles which eventually caused the downfall of Anuradhapura. It was succeeded by Polonaruva, which had been the military camp of the invaders.

At the beginning of the 16th century there were three centres of power in the country—Kotte in the south-west, Kandy in the central highlands, and Jaffna in the extreme north.

In 1505, the Portuguese navigator Lourenco de Almeida arrived at the coast of Sri Lanka. Exploiting the rivalry between the king of Kotte and Moslem merchants who monopolized the trade with spices, the Portuguese established close ties with the king, who, in addition, viewed them as his allies against the Moslem merchants and his other local rivals.

The first group of Europeans stayed in the country for 150 years. When they met with strong resistance from the kingdom of Sitawaka, the Portuguese helped strengthen the rulers of Kandy to turn them against the former, but in the end the kingdom of Kandy turned against the Portuguese with greater vigour than did Sitawaka.

The Dutch, who were the rivals of the Portuguese in their colonialist designs, helped the king of Kandy fight the latter and promised him that they would return to him the territory held by the Portuguese in return for a trading monopoly. In fact, however, they merely displaced the Portuguese and seized their possessions.

The Dutch presence on the island lasted from 1656 to 1796. In that period they concentrated in their hands the export of cinnamon, acquired a monopoly on trade in elephants, built roads and canals, and improved the cultivation of rice by bringing in slaves from Indonesia.

In 1796, the British arrived in Sri Lanka and easily defeated the Dutch, upon which they turned the island into a colony.

The Kingdom of Kandy, which for years had fought the Europeans, finally fell, in 1815, overwhelmed by the military superiority of the enemy. Nevertheless, the Kandyans rose in rebellion in 1818, only to be drowned in blood.

The British East Indies Company in Madras administered the British possessions in the area until 1802, when the British Crown took direct charge of them. In addition, the British introduced monetary economy to replace *rajakariya*, a feudal system of pay, and imposed the use of English, which remained the official language of the island until 1956.

Although the British imposed their domination on most of the island, they failed to subjugate completely the seven kingdoms into which its territory continued to be divided until 1815.

The long tradition of heroic struggle by the Sri Lankans against foreign domination forced the British to establish on the island in 1832 a colonial administration independent of the administration of their Indian colonies in order to ensure better control of the island.

In the course of the 19th century, the British developed the exploitation of banana plantations until they turned that crop into the basic wealth of the country. However, due to the economic crisis of 1844-1849, a drop in banana prices and competition from other countries, banana growing began to be replaced as of 1870 by the cultivation of tea and rubber trees.

The two world wars created favourable conditions for a considerable expansion of the export of tea. The whole tea industry was monopolized by the British, and even today, when the tea planations have been nationalized and are in the hands of local producers, the international tea trade continues to be controlled by British monopolies.

Since the beginning of this century the native inhabitants of Sri Lanka were permitted to share gradually in the administration of the colony.

Until 1910 the British permitted only ten native Sri Lankans to hold seats in the Legislative Council. This representation was enlarged under the constitution of 1920 and again in 1924. Three years later, in 1927, the British sent to the country the Donoughmore Commission, which abolished communal representation and established a Council of State made up of 50 elected members and eight appointees: the council was divided into eight executive committees. The chairmen of the committees, together with three appointed British secretaries, formed a cabinet. All these legal and governmental measures were embodied in a constitution promulgated in 1931.

In 1945, when World War II ended, Great Britain, fearing that the spirit and struggle for national independence spurred by the victory over fascism and militarism, would create problems which her weakened postwar economy could not handle, began to organize the formal independence of her Asian colonies.

The Soulbury Commission, sent to Sri Lanka in order to draw up a new constitution, established a government consisting of a chamber of representatives, a senate and a cabinet of ministers.

Sri Lanka finally obtained its independence of February 4, 1948, as a parliamentary republic within the British Commonwealth and with the name Ceylon.

The elections to constitute the first parliament were held in 1947. Already then there existed the United National Party (UNP), the Lanka Sama Samaj (Socialist), the Communist Party, and the Tamil Congress Party. On the tea plantations the Indian workers associated themselves in the Ceylon Indian Congress. The first government was formed by the UNP under Prime Minister D.S. Senanayake. It was later joined by the Tamil Congress Party.

A split occurred within the UNP in 1951, and as a result the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) was formed under the leadership of Solomon Bandaranaike.

When Senanayake died in 1952 he was succeeded by his son, Dudley Senanayake, who subsequently held the post of Prime Minister four times.

Between 1953 and 1956 the government was headed by another member of the UNP, John Kotelawala, but in the latter year the Sri Lanka Freedom Party won the elections and Bandaranaike became Prime Minister.

Under his government, Sinhalese was declared to be the country's official language, replacing English, bus transport companies and the port of Colombo were nationalized, defence agreements with Great Britain were cancelled, British air and naval bases were taken over by Sri Lanka, and relations were established with the socialist countries.

In September 1959 a Buddhist monk assassinated Prime Minister Bandaranaike, and some months later, in 1960, general elections were held, which were won by the UNP, then led by J. R. Jayawardena, and Dudley Senanayake became Prime Minister once again.

Because the elections did not produce the required majority for any party, new elections were held in July of the same year and were won by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party. Solomon Bandaranaike's widow, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, was appointed Prime Minister and her government lasted until 1965.

In elections held that year the UNP was victorious under the leadership of Dudley Senanayake, who indemnified the petroleum companies which had been nationalized in the previous period.

In 1970, Sirimavo Bandaranaike returned to the premiership in a United Front coalition government formed by the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the Communist Party and the Lanka Sama Samaj. The United Front platform called for socio-economic changes of a broadly democratic character. In July of that year, the Sri Lanka government established relations with the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and the Korean People's Democratic Republic. In the same month the parliament approved a resolution under which it assumed the authority to draw up a new constitution.

A serious drought had been plaguing the country since 1969, and by 1971 the harvest was extremely poor. Moreover, the impact of the world crisis had a disastrous effect on the Sri Lanka economy. Imports of many goods had to be cut for lack of foreign exchange or because of the high prices on the world market.

Also in 1971, an armed insurrection occurred, led by a People's Liberation Front, whose members were mostly unemployed school-leavers. The insurrection was resolutely put down by the government. The state of emergency proclaimed on that occasion was not lifted until five years later.

A new constitution, replacing the document drawn up by the Soulbury Commission, which had been Sri Lanka's supreme law since independence in 1948, was enacted on May 22, 1972. Under the new constitution the country assumed the name Sri Lanka.

On the other hand, the tension existing between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities continued gaining in intensity. In 1976 the Federal Party and other Tamil groups formed a United Liberation Front, which demanded the establishment of a Tamil state in the northern and eastern parts of the island, inhabited by this minority ethnic group.

Contradictions that emerged in the ruling coalition due to a number of economic difficulties caused by natural phenomena and the world economic crisis, as well as by the government's inability to carry out an agrarian reform and to solve the Tamil problem, resulted in a landslide victory of the opposition United National Party, headed by Junius Jayawardene, in elections held in July 1977.

The UNP won 140 of the 168 parliamentary seats, the United Front of Tamil Liberation captured 18 seats, while the Sri Lanka Freedom Party did not gain more than eight seats. 13% of the electorate abstained from voting.

In October of the same year the parliament approved a constitutional amendment establishing a presidential system of government, and in February 1978, Jayawardene became Sri Lanka's first President.

1978 was marked by continued protests and demands raised by the Tamil population, which on many occasions turned into violent clashes.

In an attempt to calm down the aroused passions, the new government included in the constitution promulgated in September of that year a provision under which Tamil was recognized as a national language alongside Sinhalese, which continued to be the official language. The constitution also modified the name of the country to the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The Jayawardene government changed the economic course followed by its predecessor, opening the country to foreign capital investments and resorting to the financing of its development plans with funds provided by the advanced capitalist countries and international organizations.

In its foreign policy, the Jayawardene government has continued Sri Lanka's participation in the movement of non-aligned countries and its orientation in favour of international peace.

Domestically, in order to isolate politically the former prime minister and leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Sirimavo Bandaranaike, the new government suspended, on October 16, 1980, her civil rights for seven years, expelled her from parliament, and prohibited her participation in the general elections to be held in 1983, as well as in the presidential elections scheduled for 1984.

Economy: Sri Lank's economy is agricultural in character, accounting for 32% of the gross national product and employing 54% of the country's economically active population, estimated at 5,118,000 people in 1978. The manufacturing sector accounts for only 13% of the GNP and employs 10% of the labour force.

Sri Lanka is the world's foremost exporter of tea. Another major item is natural rubber, the production of which in 1978 represented 4.2% of the total world output. In the same year, Sri Lanka produced 1,890,000 tons of rice, 2,207,000,000 coconuts, 110,409,000,000 cashew nuts, 198,000 tons of tea, and 156,000 tons of natural rubber.

The 1978 livestock figures included 1,542,000 head of cattle, 814,000 buffaloes, 23,000 sheep, 450,000 goats, 41,000 pigs and 41,925,000 poultry, while the output of beef was 12,900 tons. The fish catch was 160,800 tons.

Except for natural graphite, of which 11,416 tons were produced in 1978, mining operations centre mainly on the extraction of semi-precious stones.

The principal industrial production in 1978 was 575,000 tons of cement and 26,000 tons of unrefined sugar.

Sri Lanka's gross national product amounted in 1978 to 36,139 million Sri Lanka rupees, the national currency. This GNP reflected an 8.2% economic growth. In the same year, the balance of trade showed a deficit of 1,457,000,000 rupees, resulting from the fact that while the value of imports was 14,663,000,000 rupees, that of exports was only 13,206,000,000 rupees.

Sri Lanka's principal commercial partners are Japan and Great Britain, followed by India, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

The 1979 national budget closed with a deficit of 6,855,400,000 rupees (11,431,000,000 rupees of receipts and 18,286,400,000 rupees of expenditure).

At the end of 1978, Sri Lanka had 520,000,000 dollars of foreign-exchange reserves, of which 3,000,000 dollars were in gold, 29,000,000 dollars in International Monetary Fund notes, and 488,000,000 dollars in foreign exchange. The cost of living had risen in 1978 to 182.6% of the 1970 level.

In recent years Sri Lanka has used foreign aid provided by international organizations and advanced capitalist countries for financing its economy. Thus, in 1978 it received 28,000,000 dollars from the Asian Development Bank and 51,000,000 dollars from the International Monetary Fund. The major individual providers of foreign aid were the United States and Japan with 38,000,000 and 30,000,000 dollars respectively. The Netherlands and the Federal Republic of Germany were also major providers of this assistance.

Government: In 1978 Sri Lanka became a republic with a presidential system of government in which the chief executive holds great power.

Legislative power is vested in the parliament, whose members, candidates of different political parties, are elected by popular vote. There is universal suffrage in Sri Lanka.

Organizations: Sri Lanka's main political parties are the Popular Liberation Front, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, founded in 1951, the United Tamil Liberation Front, the Federal Party, founded in 1949, the Tamil Congress, founded in 1944, the Lanka Sama Samaja (Trotskyite), founded in 1935, the Communist Party and the United National Party.

The most important trade union organizations are the Congress of Ceylon Workers, founded in 1940 and affiliated to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the United Trade Union Council, founded in 1974, the Federation of Sri Lanka Trade Unions, organized in 1940 and affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, and the Labour Federation of Sri Lanka Workers, established in 1939.

Armed forces: In 1979, Sri Lanka's armed forces had 13,700 men, of whom 8,900 served in the army, 2,600 in the navy and 2,200 in the air force. The military budget for that year amounted to 411,000,000 rupees.

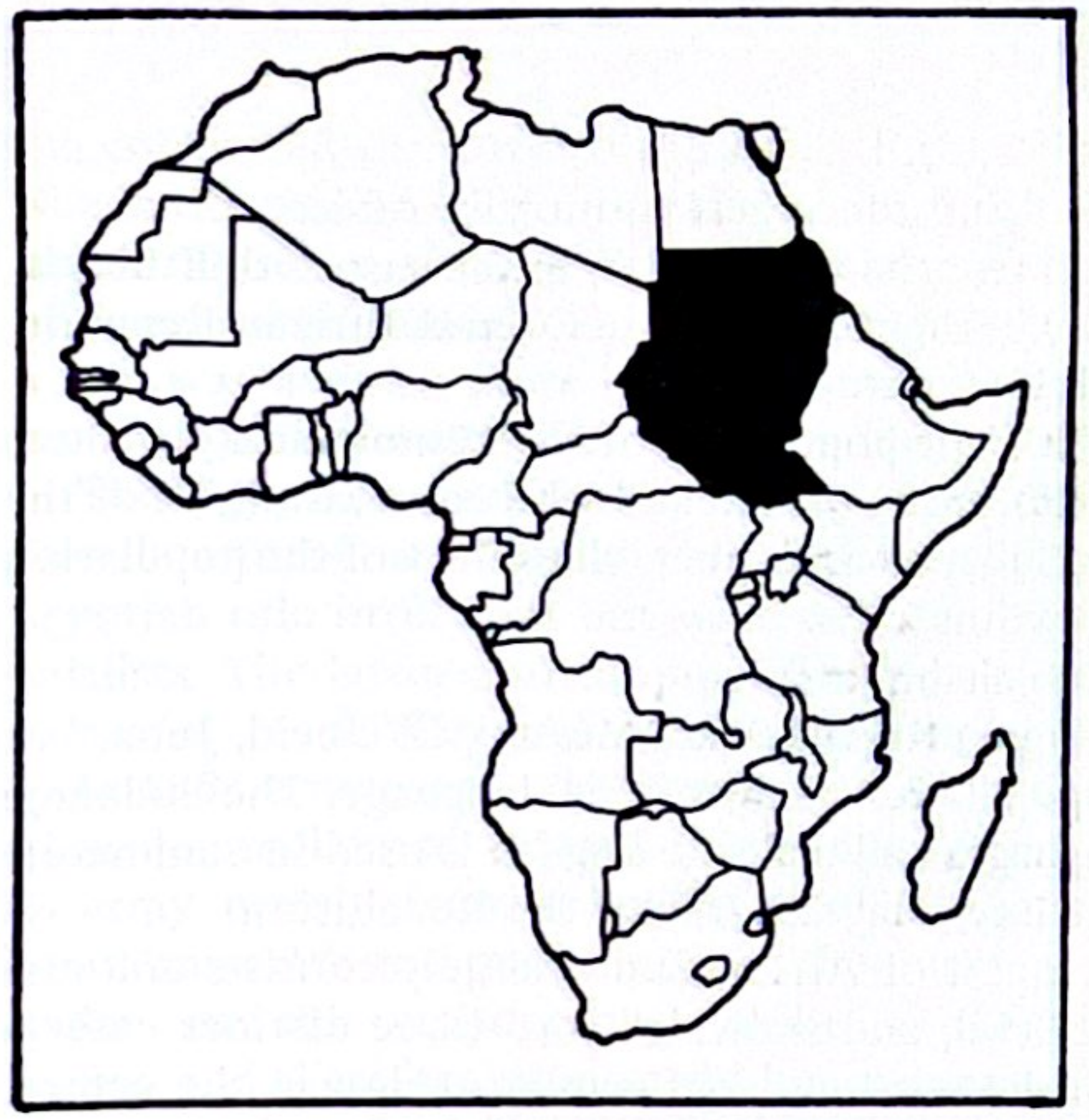
Education: In 1978, there were 2,063,873 pupils and students in Sri Lanka, and 124,700 teachers. According to a school census taken in 1971, in that year there were 8,585 state and 824 private schools—a total of 9,784—with 94,900 teachers and 2,829,900 students.

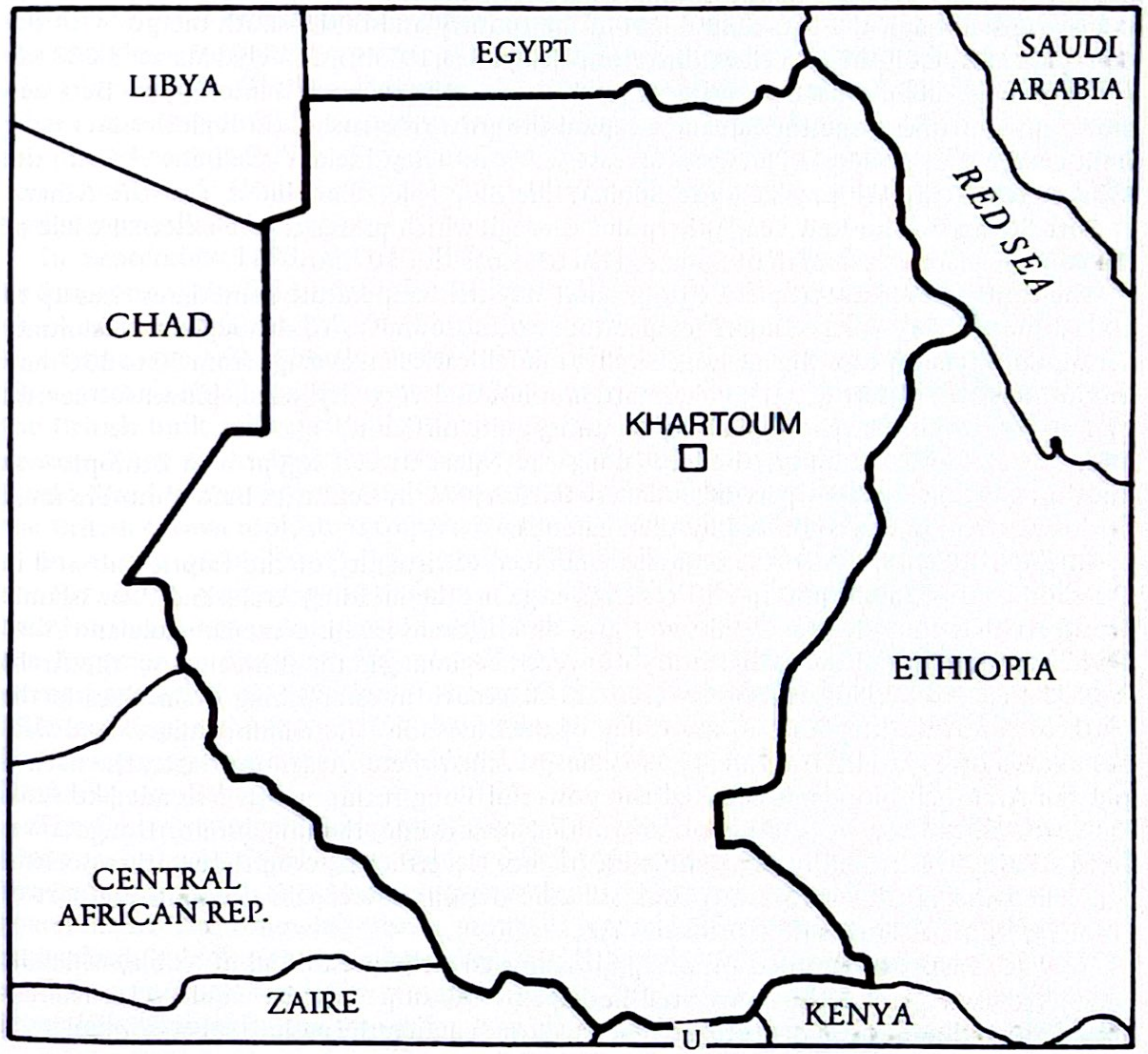
Public health: According to Sri Lanka's Department of Health statistics, there were in 1972 the following facilities in the country for every 100,000 inhabitants: 2.5 hospitals, 294.7 hospital beds (both figures do not include special maternity hospitals) and 15.7 doctors.

Religion: 70% of the population are Buddhists. There are also 2,000,000 Hindus, mostly Tamils, some 900,000 Moslems, and just over 1,000,000 Christians.

Under the constitution now in force, the state protects Buddhism, but guarantees the freedom of all religious belief.

SUDAN




EGYPT
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Official name: The Democratic Republic of Sudan.
Area: With its area of 2,505,813 sq.km, Sudan is the largest country in Africa.
Borders: In the north, Sudan has a common frontier with Egypt, in the east with Ethiopia, in the south with Kenya, Uganda and Zaire, in the west with the Central African Republic, Chad and Libya, and in the east is its Red Sea coast.
Population: 18,350,000 inhabitants (1978). The population of the 12 northern provinces consists mostly of Arabs and Nubians, who profess Islam and who constitute 67% of the total population. In the south live Nilotic, Sudanese and other tribes. 79% of the population is rural. The annual rate of population growth is 2.5%.
Capital: Khartoum-Omdurman (1,089,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Khartoum North, Port Sudan, Kassala, Wadi Medani, El Obeid, Juba.
Languages: Arabic, spoken by 51% of the population, is the official language. The Sudanese living in the south speak a total of 32 languages and dialects. English is used in commerce.
Public holidays: January 1, Independence Day: May 25, Day of the Revolution.
Geography: Situated in the north-western part of Africa, Sudan largely consists of a vast plateau laying 335 and 355 m above sea level, and is divided into three distinct natural areas—the Nubian and Sahara deserts in the north, a large marshy region in the centre, and the tropical savanna in the south. The mountainous area begins near the coast, in Nubia, runs through the east-central part of the country and in the south merges with the Ethiopian massif. The highest elevations are Mt. Kinyeti (3,187 m) and Yebal Marra (3,088 m).

The Nile is Sudan's principal waterway, which twists its way north into Egypt. Between the Egyptian frontier and the Sudanese capital the great river rushes through five cataracts, while in the south many tributaries increase its flow. They include the Bahr el Arab, the Bahr el Jebel (the White Nile), the Sophat, the Blue Nile, the Dinder, and the Athara.

Port Sudan on the Red Sea is the point through which passes all the external trade of the country. The total length of Sudan's Red Sea coast is 650 km.

The climate is mostly tropical. In April and May the temperature sometimes rises up to 40°C at noon. The average annual temperature varies around 28°C, although in the summer season rains tend to ease the heat. Generally, rainfall varies on average from 50 to 250 mm. In the northern desert areas, the harmattan, a hot and very dry wind, blows for several months, destroying crops and making breathing quite difficult.

Brief history: In Antiquity, the area along the Nile between Egypt and Ethiopia was known as Nubia—today a part of Sudanese territory. Many centuries before our era most of this vast region was colonized by the Pharaohs.

In the 6th century A.D. the Nubians embraced Christianity of the Coptic cult and in the subsequent century put up stiff resistance against the invading Arabs and their Islamic creed. At that time there existed two Christian kingdoms in this area—Dongola and Alwa —which endured until the 14th century. However, beginning in the 8th century, the Arabs crossed the Red Sea in successive waves and succeeded in establishing themselves in the south of the Alwa kingdom, in the valley of the Blue Nile. These immigrants mixed with the natives of Central Africa and thus Islam prevailed there. A century later, the natives and the Arab half-bloods established the powerful Fung realm, which extended towards the north all the way to the Egyptian frontier. Meanwhile, the kingdom of Dongola was being steadily weakened by the Islamic incursions. Nevertheless, even though the Moslems controlled the north, Christianity was still the dominant creed in the southern part of primitive Nubia as late as the 16th century.

In 1820, Pasha Mohammed Ali of Egypt launched a conquest of all of Nubia, which he completed two years later, motivated perhaps by the hope that he would seize Nubia's legendary gold mines and deposits of precious stones. Later, the pasha's successors enlarged the conquered territory to the south. Europeans established trading centres on the Upper Nile in the second half of the 19th century, and began doing business with the local inhabitants. The first of these European traders, a British consular agent in Khartoum, began by purchasing elephant tusks for making ivory. His successors preferred to trade in slaves, which was a much more lucrative business and persisted for many years, even after the prohibition of slave traffic.

The Egyptians and the British exploited the ever more impoverished country, which then became a constant drain on the Egyptian treasury. A number of revolts against Egyptian rule broke out but were defeated by forces under the command of British colonialists. The latter also suppressed slave-traders, since slavery was not conducive to the industrial revolution and was not in keeping with the interests of the British Crown.

In 1881 a native of what used to be the kingdom of Dongola, by the name of Mohammed Ahmed, proclaimed himself the *mahdi*, so long awaited by the Moslems, and organized an army mostly from the villagers of Kordofan under the slogan of universal equality, commonwealth and punishment of the Turks, as all foreigners were then called. The native leaders saw the opportunity to make use of the mahdi for fighting against Egyptian domination and therefore supported his movement. In January 1883 the mahdi's armies crushed an expedition of 10,000 Egyptian soldiers commanded by a British officer. Later another expedition of 4,000 Egyptian soldiers was routed. The government in London ordered the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops and replaced them by its own under the command of Colonel C. G. Gordon. However, the rebels seized Khartoum and Gordon was killed, whereupon the British withdrew from Sudanese territory in June 1885. In the same month, when the British—Egyptian dominion of the country was practically overthrown, the mahdi died. He was succeeded by Khalifa Abdullah, who ruled 13 years, and this period was called Mahdiya.

In September 1898, the Khalifa's army was defeated by Anglo-Egyptian troops and Sudan once again fell under joint British and Egyptian rule, but in fact it was under the absolute rule of Great Britain, which thus secured her interests in Egypt proper as well as its lifeline, the Nile. Shortly thereafter, British enterprises were built for processing long-fibre cotton, which was highly profitable. In order to facilitate their commercial operations, the British built railways linking the coast and the capital with the major manufacturing centres. They maintained their control of the territory for many years without any change. World War I had no impact on the country and when Egypt got its independence in 1922, the British Crown took steps to preserve the status quo in Sudan.

In August 1924 several Egyptian battalions still stationed in Sudan mutinied against the British. In November of the same year, the British Governor was assassinated. Great Britain then demanded the immediate withdrawal from Sudanese territory of all the Egyptian soldiers and officials still staying there. When this was done, the British strengthened their domination of the entire territory. An Anglo-Egyptian treaty signed in 1936 confirmed the status of Sudan in favour of British interests. During World War II, Sudanese troops were reinforced in order to counter any attack the Italians might launch from Libya or Ethiopia.

The first elections in Sudan took place in 1948. They were won by the Independence Front over the National Front, which called for a union with Egypt. In December 1951 the Sudanese Legislative Assembly agreed by an overwhelming majority to demand self-government. The following year a group of young officers seized power in Egypt and recognized Sudan's right to independence. In February 1953, the British and the Egyptians agreed to grant Sudan self-government within three years and to have an international commission supervise the transition. The National Union Party won the elections in the same year, and its leader became Prime Minister. The process of replacing British officials and officers by Sudanese in some public posts and in the armed forces was then accelerated. Serious differences with the Egyptian government emerged in 1955. On August 16 the Sudanese parliament called for immediate self-determination and on December 19 passed a resolution stipulating that Sudan was a "fully sovereign Republic". The Republic was constituted in January 1956.

The British then stirred up differences between the north and south of the country and succeeded in aggravating this problem with the help of Anglican missionaries. Already a year earlier, armed separatist groups made their appearance along the Nile. In 1958 General Ibrahim Aboud seized power by a military coup and launched an offensive against the people of the south, initiating at the same time a programme of "Arabization" of their black tribes and native culture. In addition, the new regime abrogated the constitution and dissolved parliament. In 1962 it banned political agitation carried out by European missionaries, both Roman Catholic and Protestant. Nevertheless in the early months of the following year they were accused of having taken part in an attack on a provincial capital and of attempts to bring about a separation of the south from the north of Sudan. Some 750 missionaries were then expelled from the country in 1964, but secession continued to be encouraged from abroad, including the United States, which wanted to strengthen its influence on the African continent. In fact, with the help of the CIA, the Americans tried to replace the British in the area. With this objective in mind they made used of mercenaries supported by Congo's Moise Tchombe and armed with Belgian and U.S. weapons. In October a popular revolt overthrew the dictatorship. The rebels had the support of the workers, peasants and a number of black tribes in the south of the country. A national democratic government came to power and elections were soon held of members of a Constituent Assembly which would draw up a new constitution. Measures were taken at the same time to neutralize the machinations of the CIA, which was trying at all costs to maintain the operations of terrorist groups in the south, financially assisted by NATO powers. In 1965 the political right came to power after having won a majority in the Constituent Assembly through a trick which eliminated the 60 seats apportioned to the south. Thereupon, a government was set up by Mahari Ashari, the leader of the National Party, which formed a coalition with the National Union Party. The Communist Party of Sudan and the People's Democratic Party, which formed the United National Front, were excluded from the cabinet.

On May 25, 1969, a military coup headed by General Gaafar Al Numeiri brought to power a Revolutionary Council, which was supported by the Communist Party and other progressive political organizations. At that time, the new government adopted a nationalist policy, established friendly relations with the socialist countries and seemed to be moving out of the imperialist orbit. It also adopted a policy of regional autonomy for the black tribes of the south, nationalized banks and other foreign-owned companies and approved a five-year plan of economic development. Economic measures were put into effect in the south with the objective of eliminating the existing ethnic differences. However, contradictions then began to grow between the Ansar and Khatmiya religious sects and the Revolutionary Council. The leader of the Ansar sect, Imam Hadi al-Mahdi, was killed in an armed clash with Sudanese troops and the Khadiya sect was left virtually isolated. However, the positive road on which the new government had set out was soon abandoned.

In the middle of the next year Numeiri restricted the activities of the Communist Party and of other progressive political organizations. This produced friction with some prominent personalities who remained in the government. There was also discontent among junior army officers. On July 19, 1971, a group of officers overthrew Numeiri, but they failed to retain power and Numeiri restored his control of the country within 72 hours. The principal leaders of the Communist Party were executed together with the general secretaries of workers' and student organizations, as well as all those who had distinguished themselves in the progressive and revolutionary movement. In October the Numeiri regime banned all political parties and established an official political organization called the Sudanese Socialist Union. In its external relations, too, the Numeiri government took a sharp turn to the right and strengthened its ties with Great Britain, the United States and other advanced capitalist countries.

In September 1973 Numeiri had to hurriedly leave the Fouth Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries in Algiers in order to crush an anti-government demonstration in Khartoum. Later he promised the British government to provide compensation to all British nationals who had been affected by the nationalization of their enterprises.

In the middle of 1975 Numeiri suspended a number of nationalization projects and passed a law offering major guarantees to foreign capital in his country. Responding to this offer, a consortium of European, Japanese and Arab firms announced in June of the same year that they would invest more than 180,000,000 dollars in Sudan's sugar industry, while the British monopoly Lonrho Limited signed a contract for the construction of two sugar refineries, with a total production capacity of 350,000 tons.

Late in 1975 the Sudanese parliament approved five constitutional amendments. Several days before, the 13th abortive coup against Numeiri had taken place, this time led by Colonel Hassan Hussein Othomane. One of the amendments authorizes the head of the regime to assume all power whenever he deems it necessary, and another amendment authorizes the legislature to stipulate when life imprisonment is to be imposed, as well as the conditions of imprisonment.

Following the abortive coup in September 1975 many officers and soldiers were arrested after fighting in which six government soldiers and four rebels had been killed. Numeiri closed the University of Khartoum, alleging that it was used for hiding the plotters' weapons. Then he called for an emergency session of the U.N. Security Council and accused Libya of complicity in the events. Two months later more than 140 individuals, including the leader of the uprising, Hassan Hussein Othomane, were placed on trial, and on February 16, 1976, 16 more officers faced the firing squad.

Military agreements signed with Egypt in October 1976 and January 1977 guaranteed to the Sudanese government assistance from its northern neighbour in the case of any trouble. Tied to Cairo since 1974 by an agreement on political and military integration, Sudan appears to be Egypt's privileged ally in Africa.

Beginning in 1977, the Numeiri regime seemed to be seeking a certain internal as well as external "detente". Some exiled personalities returned, such as—in 1978—Sadek al-Mahdi, the leader of the Ansar religious sect and of the Oumma Party, who made a rapprochement with Numeiri . Reconciliation was made with some elements in the so-called National Opposition Front, and the tense relations with Libya and Ethiopia eased.

However, this "opening" had its limits. The official party continues to claim exclusive representation of all "national aspirations, although national unity has not yet been consolidated", at the same time rejects "class struggle, liberal democracy and communism", and proclaims "revolution" and "progress".

Sudan's economic programmes have been stymied by floods, by Numeiri's support of the Camp David agreements, which hampers assistance from some Arab petroleum-exporting countries, and by the intervention of the International Monetary Fund in the government's economic policy. Sudan's external public debt, renegotiated several times, rose from 400,000,000 dollars in 1973 to 900,000,000 in 1975, and 2,000,000,000 in 1978.

At the beginning of 1980, Sudan was granted an extension of seven to ten years to repay its debts and received new loans from France (160,000,000 francs), the IMF (300,000,000 dollars), the United States (200,000,000 dollars for the purchase of food and spare parts), the Arab Monetary Fund (44,000,000 for balancing the budget), and West Germany (200,000,000 in cancelled debts), all of this in exchange for measures to strengthen the private, national and foreign sectors, priority given to the development of the economic infrastructure, food purchases, greater economy in spending foreign exchange, anti-inflationary measures, and a freeze on credit-financed capital construction.

No domestic stability has been achieved. In July 1978 the Ministers of Defence, Justice, Transport and Energy and Mining were dismissed, together with the Army Chief-of-Staff. The purge also extended to some leaders of the Sudanese Socialist Union. Numeiri took personal charge of the Ministry of Defence.

Relations with the Ansar head, Sadek al-Mahdi, continue having their ups and downs. Sharif al-Diadi, who had made peace with Numeiri in March 1978, resigned in November of the same year from the Political Bureau of the Socialist Union in protest against Sudan's support of the Camp David agreements and went into exile. The only steady support Numeiri and his government seem to be getting is that of the Moslem Brotherhood of Hassan al-Tourabi, whose members, enraged by a leftist victory in elections held by the Union of Sudanese Students in March 1980, killed the Communist student Ghadi Abdel Hakim and wounded 15 others. The university was closed. Another Communist, Kassem Amire, the founder of the railway workers' union, who had been arrested in 1979, died in prison on February 5, 1980, of head injuries. The regime has continued to denounce agitation by "atheists" and "Communists", and to send people to prison, in particular at Kouber, as reported by Numeiri's opponents.

In December 1979 Numeiri expressed his concern about an Egyptian project to divert the waters of the Nile for Israeli use. "Any decision in this respect is the joint concern of the riparian states—Sudan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi" noted Numeiri's official spokesman. The Vice-Minister of Information, M. Tijani, declared on his part in February 1980 that the Egyptian-Sudanese defence pact would be revised if the Israelis established a diplomatic mission in Cairo, and after the Arab summit conference in Tunis Numeiri defended the Palestinian's right to their homeland.

At the same time, Khartoum expressed its intention to improve relations with Baghdad and Addis Ababa. Nevertheless, after the Israeli embassy had been opened in Cairo, Numeiri only recalled his ambassador in Egypt, and at the end of 1980 joined the critics of the union between Chad and Libya.

With respect to Ethiopia, Sudan's Vice-President, Hamid Khalil, visited Addis Ababa in March 1980, and in a joint statement the two governments pledged "scrupulous respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and national unity" of their states.

In a political move differently interpreted by the Sudanese media, on September 14, 1980, Numeiri left the post of Secretary-General of the Sudanese Socialist Union to his First Vice-President, Abdelmagid Mohammed Ibrahim.

Economy: According to the last available data, Sudan's GNP had been growing at the annual rate of 5% between 1970 and 1977. Its 1978 value in terms of prices on the world market was approximately 5,540,000,000 dollars. There are no reliable data concerning the structure of Sudan's economy, although its mainstay is agriculture, which provides employment to 79% of the economically active population. The principal crops are cotton (60% of the country's exports), peanuts, sesame, sugar cane and some others. Sudan also produces 30% of the world's total output of gum arabic. The 1977 production of beef was 170,000 tons, of mutton 123,000 tons and 15,400 tons of wool. The mining industry produces small quantities of iron, chromium, manganese, salt and magnesite.

In 1977 Sudan's exports amounted to 590,000,000 dollars and imports to 241,000,000 dollars. The exports consist almost completely of non-mineral primary commodities. 44% of the 1977 exports went to the advanced capitalist countries, 36% to the developing countries, 15% to the socialist countries, and 5% to petroleum-exporting Arab countries with a surplus of capital. Sudan's external public debt in 1977 amounted to 1,732,000,000 dollars and its foreign-exchange reserves were 23,000,000 dollars.

In the same year 79% of the labour force was employed in agriculture, 10% in industry, and 11% in the services industry.

Government: All power is concentrated in the hands of General Gaafar Al Numeiri. The constitution has not been in effect since 1969. Administratively, Sudan is divided into 18 provinces.

Organizations: Political parties, trade unions and other mass organizations have been banned since 1971. The only permitted political organization is the official Sudanese Socialist Union. The Communist Party has been exposed to the most intensive persecution and repression. Most of its leaders were executed by the regime in 1971, and since then it has been working in strictest clandestinity. Workers' organizations, too, are being persecuted and are outlawed.

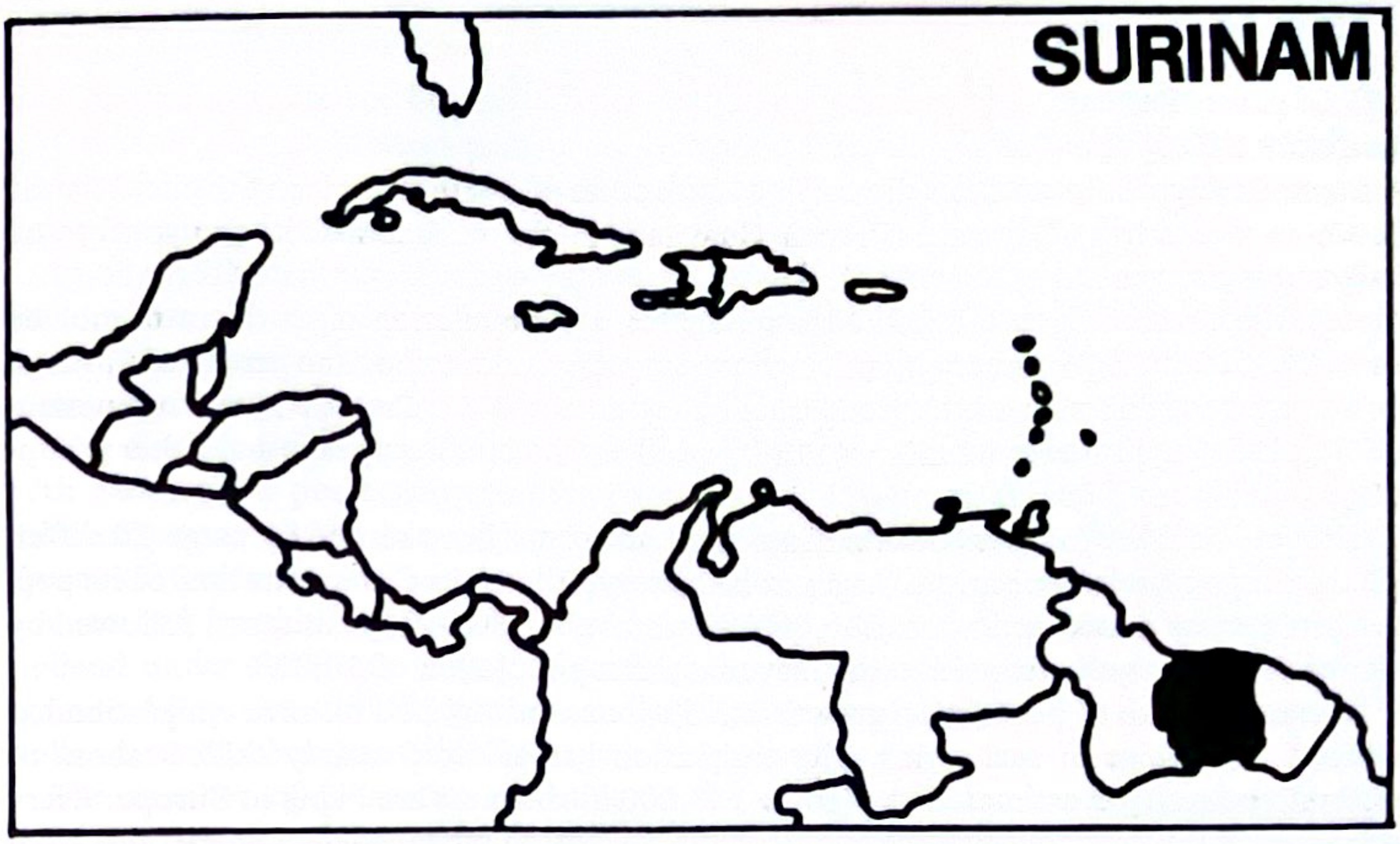
Armed forces: Sudan has some 62,900 men under arms, of whom 60,000 serve in the army and the rest in the navy and the air force. 6,000 troops are permanently stationed in the south, and there is an additional paramilitary force in the country, approximately 5,000 men strong. The navy has about half a dozen patrol boats and the air force 40 aircraft, including jet fighter-bombers. Numeiri himself is in the command of the armed forces.

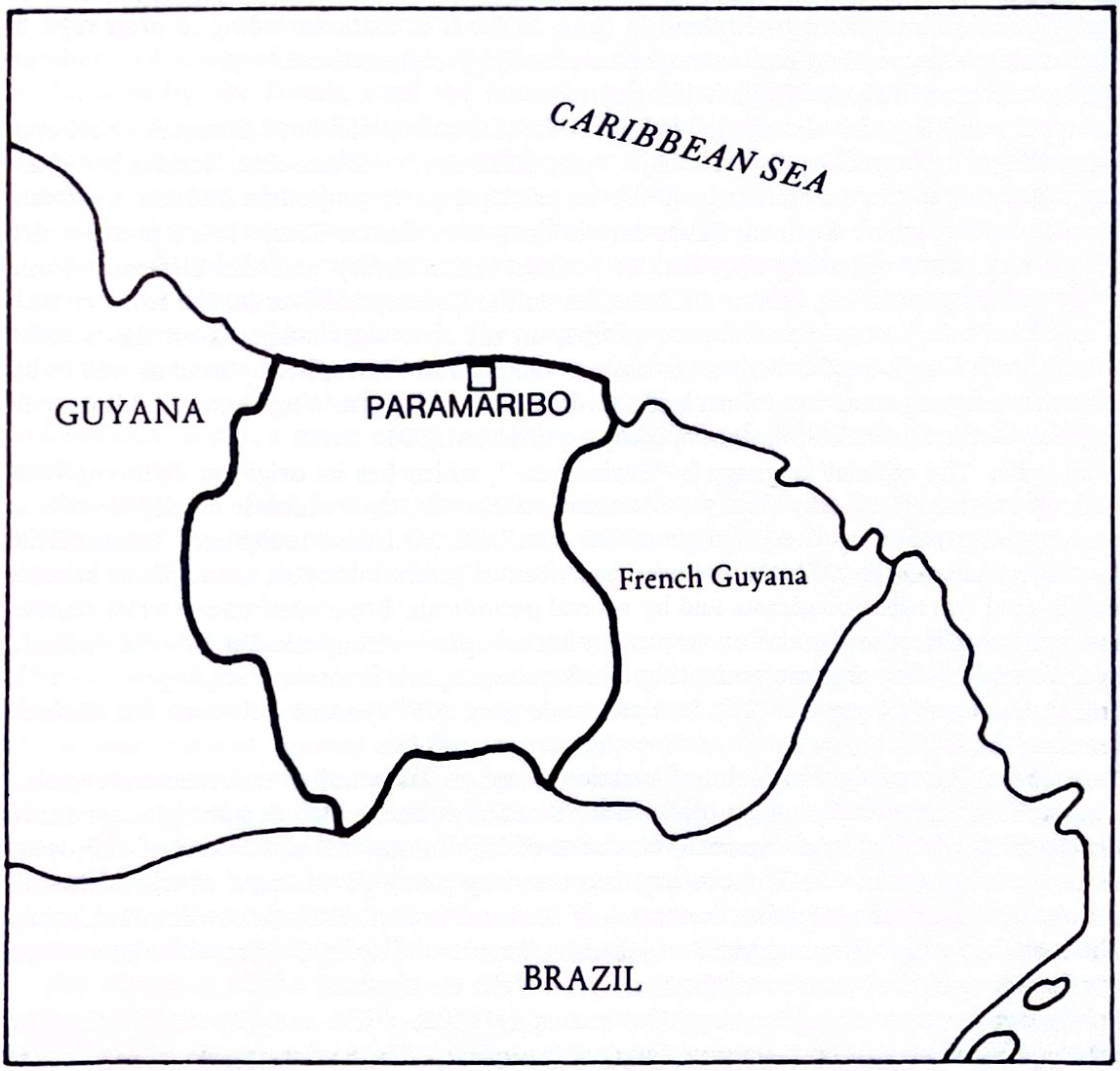
Education: There are some 5,500 primary and secondary schools in Sudan, attended by more than 1,000,000 pupils. Nevertheless, the level of illiteracy is still high—85% of the school-age and adult population. Primary schools are attended by 620,750 pupils, secondary schools by 172,384 students, technical schools by 10,500, and universities by 10,200.

Public health There is one hospital bed for every 1,098 inhabitantants and one doctor for every 12,527 inhabitants.

Religion: The majority of the population of the six northern provinces are Moslems, while in the southern provinces tradional animist cults and Christian creeds prevail.

SURINAM




CARIBBEAN SEA
GUYANA
PARAMARIBO
French Guyana
BRAZIL

Official name: Surinam.
Area: 163,265 sq.km.
Borders: Surinam is located on the north-eastern coast of South America with the Atlantic Ocean in the north, Cayenne (French Guayana) in the east, Brazil in the south, and Guayana in the west.
Population: According to United Nations figures, the population of Surinam numbered some 435,000 in 1976, almost half living in the capital, Paramaribo. The people of Surinam are a mixture of different ethnic groups, including Indians (37%), Creoles (30%), Indonesians (15%), blacks and American Indians (13%), as well as Chinese, Europeans and other groups (5%).

The area known today as Surinam is estimated to have been settled by some 20 different ethnic groups in the various stages of its history. The largest concentration of its population is to be found in Paramaribo, which has about 150,000 inhabitants, followed by Nieuw Nickerie on the frontier with Guayana with a population of 30,000.

The annual rate of population growth is 3.6%, but constant and massive emigration has reduced this figure in real terms. The emigration has affected mainly skilled labour of productive age. It is estimated that some 100,000 Surinamese are living in Europe. Every year some 8,000 people leave the country. Shortly before independence, in 1975, 40% of the population emigrated to Holland in spite of the fact that—according to press reports of that time—they encountered economic and social problems there.
Capital: Paramaribo (150,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Surinam is divided into the following districts: Surinam, Nickerie, Marrowinje, Brokopondo, Commewinje, Para, Saramacca, and Coronie. Besides being the capital of the country. Paramaribo is also its principal port, lying some 200 km. upstream from the point where Surinam River empties into the Atlantic Ocean. It is a modern city with architecture reflecting the distinct periods of its history and the different ethnic origins of its population. Nieuw Nickerie lies on the Corentyne River on the frontier with Guayana, while, in the extreme east, Albina, on the river Marrowinje, is on the frontier with French Guayana. Both these towns are linked with the capital by road as well as by internal waterways and coastal navigation. Moengo is a major mining centre and the headquarters of the Surinam Aluminium Company (SURALCO).
Languages: The official language is "Surinamese", which has its origin in different West African languages, Dutch, English, Spanish and French, and which is locally known as *sranang tongo*, that is "the language of Surinam". Dutch is also recognized as an official language, since until 1975 the country had been a Dutch colony; it is taught at schools and is used in radio broadcasts and by several periodicals. Because of commercial reasons and tourist traffic, the population—especially in the capital—also speaks English and Spanish. In different regions, the predominating ethnic groups speak their own languages.
Public holidays: November 25, Independence Day (1975), and February 25, Day of Revolution (1980).
Geography: Due to its geological configuration, Surinam has four distinctive natural regions: a coastal strip practically on sea level, an intermediary zone, which in some places rises to the elevation of 150 feet above sea level, a zone of high mountains and a zone of high-lying savanna in the southwest. The country is crossed by many rivers, most of which flow to the north; thus, river navigation forms one of Surinam's main methods of communication. The most important rivers are the Surinam, the Commewinje, the Cottica, the Marrowinje, the Coppename, the Saramacca, the Nickerie and the Corentyne.
Brief history: After the discovery of America in 1492, a line was drawn, dividing the spheres of Spanish and Portuguese influence. It crossed a "land of the nomads", known as the Guayanas, where the English, French and Dutch could settle.

Originally, Surinam was a part of the Guayanas and was inhabited by American Indians, who suffered first from the arrival of traders and then of colonizers, and, therefore, were forced to move to the south.

In the 15th century, Spanish sailors discovered the territory and were permitted to settle there, although it was not until 1593 when Philip II took official possession of the area. Subsequently, the English and Dutch made several attempts to seize the territory, where sugar cane, cocoa, cotton, coffee and tobacco were grown.

The English first succeeded in establishing themselves in what is today Surinam in the 17th century. Its possession was then contested for 150 years. In 1667, the English ceded the territory to Holland in exchange for New Amsterdam (today's New York) under the Treaty of Breda. In 1682, the colony was sold to the West Indies Company and in 1779 was retaken by the English, who then held it until 1802. In that year it was returned to Holland under the Peace Treaty of Amiens. But two years later the English seized it once again and kept it until 1816, when, under the Treaty of Paris, it was definitely ceded to Holland, which then consolidated its colonial rule there.

The number of plantations existing in the colony varied according to the prevalent economic and social situation. Although in certain periods there were as many as 600 plantations, it is confirmed that in 1830 there remained only 450 and by 1903 their number had dropped to a mere 82. The plantations were worked by African slaves, brought to America by the Dutch, until the abolition of slavery in 1863. Labourers were then brought to Surinam from Holland's Asian colonies—Indonesia and mainly India—to replace the black slaves. Also brought over were Chinese, Indonesian, East Indian and other labourers under a system of virtual slavery, known as "indenture", which involved contracts binding the workers to what was in effect forced labour.

This produced many rebellions, which were brutally suppressed and crushed.

Surinam's history includes active resistance by certain sectors of the population, which never let themselves be dominated. They were known as "Bush Negroes" and lived in the forests in the south of the country, organized in African-type villages. Dutch expeditions against the ancestors of today's Saramaccas and Njukas were defeated until eventually Holland had to sign a peace treaty recognizing the right of the "Bush Negroes" to their lands.

World War II, which brought about the occupation of Holland by Nazi Germany and the conquest of Indonesia by the Japanese, frustrated all the Dutch plans of economic expansion. The only parts of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which remained unoccupied were its American possessions.

Queen Wilhelmina, who had formed a government-in-exile in London, promised that after the war the Kingdom of the Netherlands would be re-organized—in keeping with the ideals of the United Nations—on the basis of an absolute, mutual recognition of association of the metropolitan country and the overseas possessions. However, at the end of the war Indonesia not only proclaimed its independence, but also absorbed Dutch New Guinea, which left only the American colonies as subjects of the proposed constitutional experiment. The negotiations between Holland and these possessions—the Dutch Antilles and Dutch Guayana—began in 1946. Agreement was reached in 1948 on an "internal order" whereby the Dutch government granted to the overseas colonies universal suffrage and introduced other constitutional amendments, which gave them a certain degree of autonomy.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands drew up a Magna Carta that was discussed in all the overseas territories until 1954, and two years later Surinam got its internal autonomy, with Holland keeping control of defence, foreign trade and external relations; it also appointed the Governor, the ministers and the members of an Advisory Council.

In elections held in 1963, victory was scored by a coalition made up of the National Party of Surinam, the Hindustani Party and the Indonesian Peasants' Party. In the next elections, held in 1967, 12 parties ran and the electoral contest was won again by the National Party of Surinam, led by John Adolf Pengel. According to Surinamese historians, party politics in that period took a racial character.

The followers of Prime Minister Pengel were essentially Creoles, while Jaggernauth Lachmon's Hindustani Party sympathizers were in their majority East Indians. The former were urban residents, the latter country people. In March 1969, following a wave of strikes Pengel resigned and formed an interim cabinet. Later that year Lachmon's party won 19 of the 39 parliamentary seats but, in order to avoid possible future confrontations, formed a coalition government with Jules Sedney, the leader of the National Party of Surinam.

It was at that time, when the Republican National Party, which was of a nationalist and independence character, gained in popularity in spite of the fact that in the 1969 elections it had won only one parliamentary seat for its leader, Eddy Bruma. In 1973 a new wave of strikes by Surinamese workers, already organized in four trade-union organizations, swept the country and in the same year Sedney lost the elections to a wide coalition made up of the National Party of Surinam, the Republican National Party and other poitical parties, which demanded negotiations with Holland on full independence. That independence was granted under the Hague Agreement in 1974, and went into effect on November 25, 1975, under the premiership of Henck Arron. The Governor, Johan Ferrier, was elected Constitutional President, while the Surinamese parliament was drawing up a constitution.

However, within the framework of the independence of the country, a set of agreements was concluded on future cooperation between Holland and Surinam.

The days preceding independence had been marked by political tension when Lachmon, for the opposition, waged a campaign against independence and many Surinamese emigrated to Holland. Subsequently, in a historical turn-about, Lachmon decided to collaborate with the Arron government in seeking independence.

In the first elections held in Surinam after independence, in 1977, Arron was re-elected when his wide coalition defeated another group of political parties, headed by Lachmon, by winning 22 seats against the opposition's 17.

However, Arron's young government ran into difficulties—in spite of considerable financial assistance promised by Holland—and the ruling coalition quickly lost its popularity. Meanwhile, Arron's majority was melting away for a number of reasons until in 1978 the two rival coalitions had an equal number of seats, which produced a governmental crisis. Arron had to call new, premature elections for 1979, which never took place because on February 25, 1979, a group of non-commissioned officers in the army, dissatisfied with their situation and with the situation in the country in general, toppled the Arron government, set up a National Military Council, and indefinitely postponed the elections. They also suspended the activities of the political parties and of parliament and promised a progressive governmental programme.

The National Military Council was headed by Sergeants Daisy Bouterse, Bedressein Sital, Chas Mijnals and others, who led the struggle for the realization of the demands of the non-commissioned officers and from the beginning expressed nationalist and popular sentiments. Their primary objective was the elimination of administrative corruption, of which they accused the overthrown regime.

The new government of Surinam, which still retained as the ceremonial President Johan Ferrier in the role of Head of State, naturally became the target of internal and external pressure, including a planned invasion by European mercenaries, which was foiled in time by the army.

Subsequently, Colonel Bouterse set up a civilian-military government presided over by Dr. Henk Chin-A-Sen.

Surinam joined the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in 1979, in the course of the Sixth Summit Conference in Havana, which was attended by Arron.

Economy: Surinam's principal natural resources are its mineral deposits, the most important of which are its great reserves of bauxite, which made the country one of the world's leading exporters of this ore and its derivatives Bauxite ore was discovered in Surinam in 1915, and by 1950 already accounted for 80% of the country's exports. It is produced and processed by SURALCO, a subsidiary of ALCOA and the Dutch-owned Dutch Billiton Company.

In 1967, bauxite production in Surinam amounted to 5,500,000 tons, making the country the world's second largest exporter of this raw material. All the production is exported to the United States and Europe, ALCOA getting a high percentage of its raw material supplies from its operations in Surinam. In 1974, production and exports of bauxite reached close to 4,000,000 tons, of alumina 1,100,000 tons, and of aluminium 54,000, tons. The government of Surinam imposed a tax on the multinational corporations, which represents a major part of the national income. The country has a limited capacity for processing the ore and therefore must export raw bauxite in large quantities. The exploitation and sales of the mineral are controlled by SURALCO and BILLITON.

Surinam also has a wealth of other mineral resources, such as gold, platinum, nickel and fuels. The existence is suspected of iron ore deposits, including top-qualtiy ore, and discoveries have been made recently of manganese in almost commercial quantities, while exploration is being made of deposits of copper and other ores.

Agriculture is not well developed, although there is an abundance of rich soil. Apart from rice, of which 130,000 tons were produced in 1975, the production of other crops has not reached a volume which would replace the import of many foodstuffs. The other crops include sugar cane, citrus fruit and vegetables, and there is also livestock production. The importance of the fishing industry has recently grown and Surinam has signed agreements with foreign fishing fleets on their operating in Surinamese waters.

Another branch of Surinam's economy involves the exploitation of the country's forestry resources, since 90% of its area is covered by vast forests. However, timber production has gone down in the past decade, in 1975, the year of independence, amounting to 230,000 cu.m.

Other industry is limited to production of electric power in hydro-electric plants and some consumer-goods production.

The bulk of Surinam's foreign trade is with the United States, Holland and the Federal Republic of Germany, although there is growing trade with such neighbouring countries as Brazil, Venezuela and others. More than 90% of Surinam's total exports are made up of bauxite and its derivatives. A large percentage of the country's imports consists of consumer goods.

On granting independence to Surinam, Holland provided it with substantial long- and short-term credit for the development of joint projects. However, unemployment continues to be one of Surinam's great problems; in 1975, unemployment affected 25% of its labour force.

Government: Since independence and until the take-over by the military in February 1979, Surinam had a parliamentary form of government. Currently it has a civilian-military government headed by Col. Daisy Bouterse, who is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces (army and the police). The National Military Council, made up of non-commissioned army officers, is currently presided over by Sergeant Nnakoesing Hardophnoesanir. The civilian cabinet is headed by Henk Chin-A-Sen.

Armed forces: The commander-in-chief of the armed forces (i.e., the army and the police) is at present Col. Bouterse. The National Military Council was formed under the proclamation of February 25, 1979, which overthrew the Arron government. It is the executive body of the armed forces.

Organizations: Following the downfall of the Arron government, a "Movement of the 25th of February" was formed, which associates both civilians and the military under a programme pursued by the new administration.

However, in the course of its political history, Surinam has seen the activity of many political parties and political, social, cultural and religious organizations. On some occasions as many as 20 small groups took part in the electoral contest, associated in the traditional, large political blocs, alliances and coalitions. Many of those parties reflect the ethnic divisions still existing in the country.

The principal organizations include the four trade union centres and the political parties associated in the NPK and VDP coalitions, as well as some other independent groups.

The NPK coalition, led by Arron, was formed by the National Party of Surinam (NPS) with influence in urban areas and among the black population, the Kaun Tani Persatuan Indonesia (KTPI), i.e. the United Indonesian Peasant Party, the Roman Catholic Party (PSV), and the Hindustani Progressive Party (HPP), a breakaway group from the VDP coalition, with a following among the East Indians.

The other political party coalition, led by Lachmon and known as the VDP (United Democratic Parties), includes Lachmon's own United Reform Party of the East Indian ethnic group and its religious leaders, the "Pendawa Lima"—a splinter group of the KTPI —and an alliance of small political parties including the Socialist Party of Surinam (SPS), the National Democratic Party (NDP) and the "Bush Negro" group from the interior of the country.

There are also organizations that are independent of these alliances, such as the National Republican Party (NRP) led by Eddy Bruma, which has its base among the black population and bauxite miners, or the People's Party (Volkspartij) led by Dr. Rubin Lie Pauw Sam, which enjoys popularity among the youth.

The same is true of the Peasants' and Labourers' Union (PALU), the Progressive Moslem Party (VMP) and the Progressive National Party (PNP), which formed an electoral alliance in 1977 under the name "The Third Bloc". There are yet some other, minor political organizations.

Culture, education, sport: Surinam's culture reflects the great variety of ethnic groups—almost 20—coming from all the continents, who make up the country's population, which has given Surinam its popular epithet "the little United Nations". The music, the dress, the languages and even the food show their different origins, and their mixture, which constitutes Surinamese culture, is acquiring its own identity since independence.

Surinamese cultural expressions are also influenced by neighbouring Brazil, with its Portuguese language, by Cayenne, with its French, and by Guayana, which speaks English.

No lesser mark has been left on Surinam's culture by its history of colonial exploitation, slavery, resistance and struggle for independence of the country where Dutch influence predominated.

Education in Surinam is free and obligatory for children seven to 12 years old under the Dutch educational system. There are public and private schools at the primary, secondary and higher levels. In 1974, there was 24% illiteracy and 50% of primary school leavers did not continue their education. There is a university in Paramaribo, which receives assistance from the Dutch universities at Leyden, Amsterdam and Wageningen and provides instruction to some 500 students in medicine, law, agricultural sciences and socio-economic studies. In 1976 only 18.3% of the national budget was spent on education.

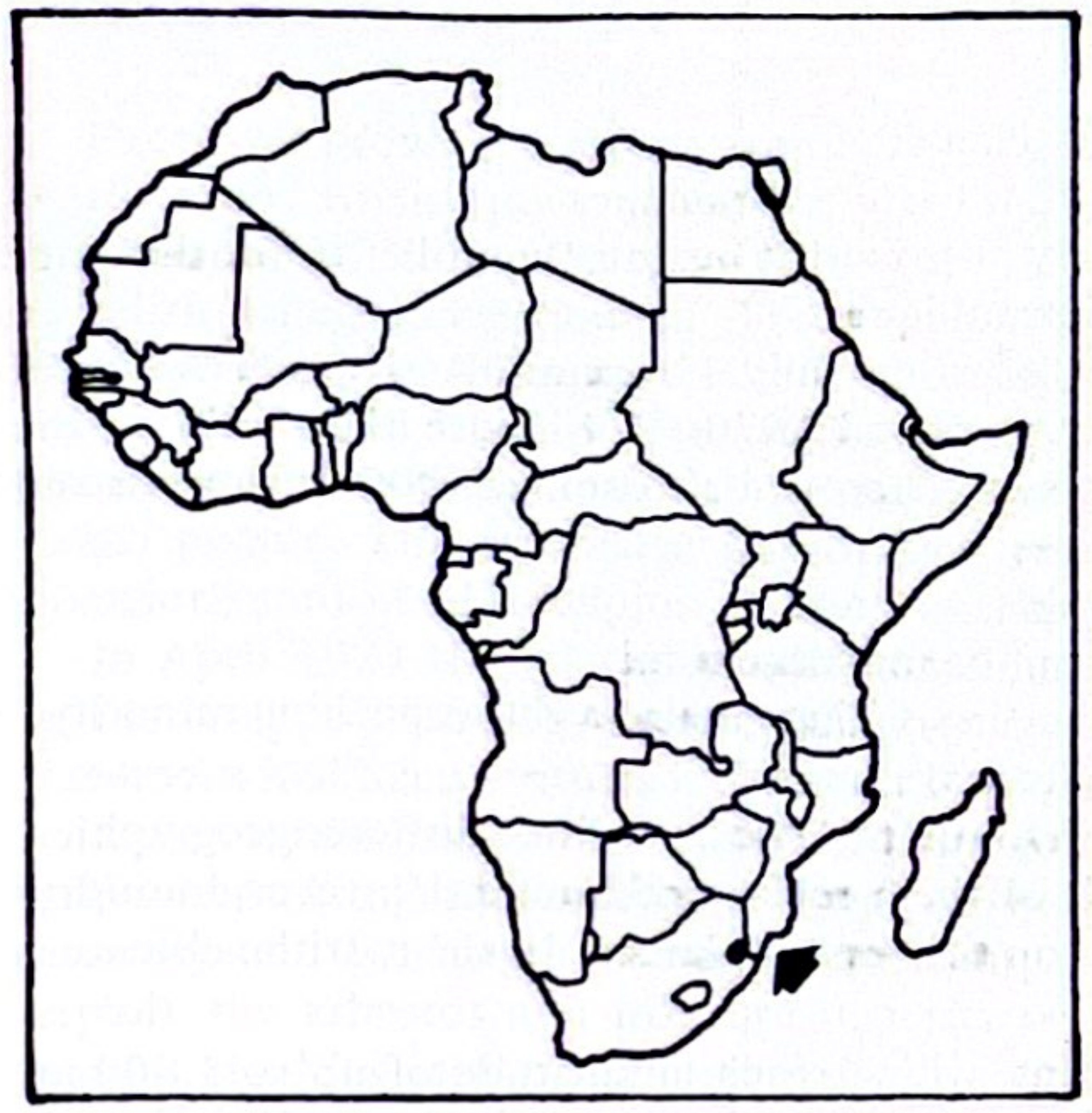
On the other hand, the small country has three daily newspapers published in Dutch (and Surinamese). There are also Chinese periodicals and a number of weeklies and monthly magazines. There is a modern television studio and six radio stations. In 1974 there were some 150,000 radio and 74,000 television receivers in the country.

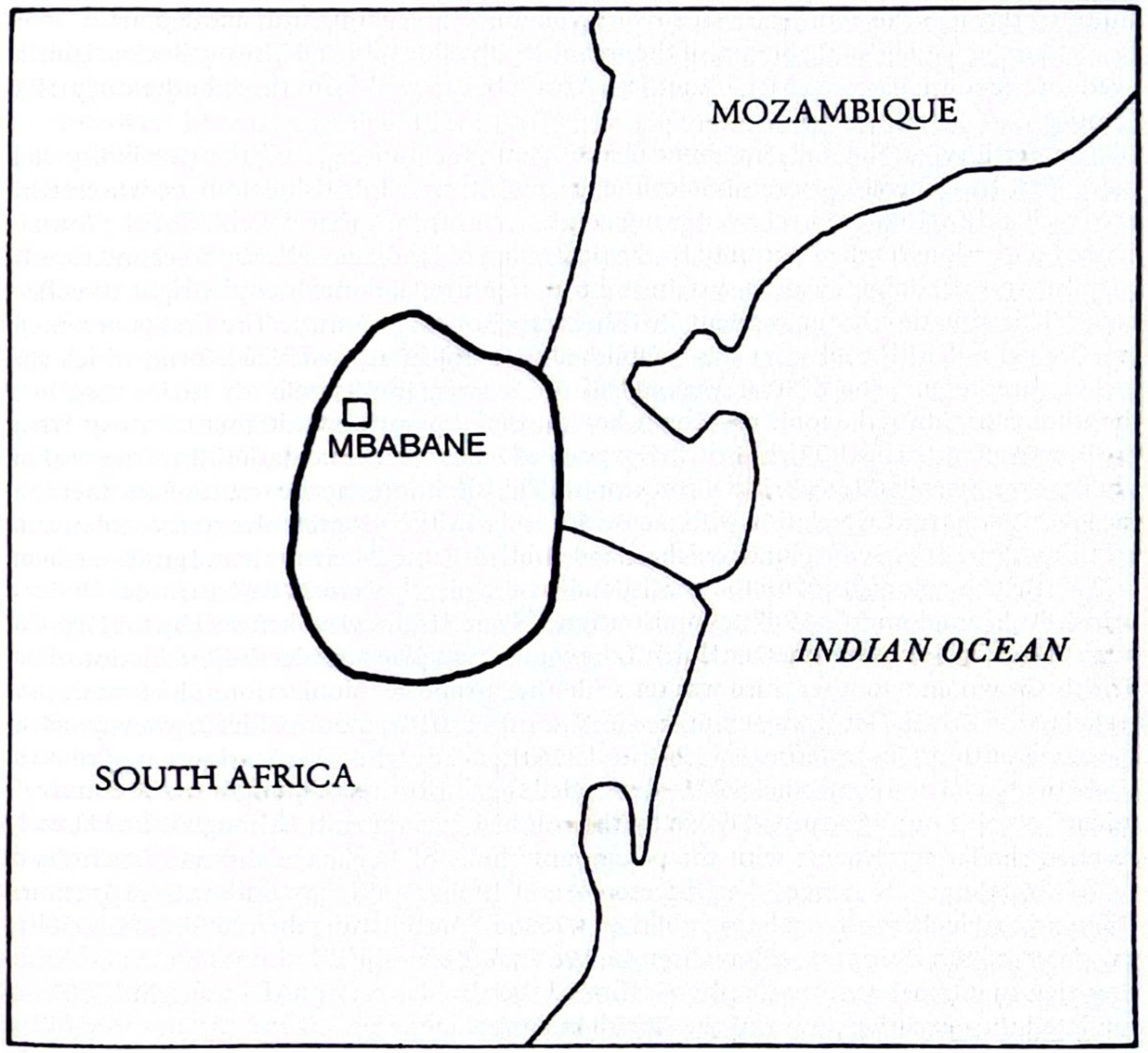
Surinam's most popular sport is football, but a number of other sports are also pursued.

Public health: The steady exodus of professionally trained people has produced a situation where there are at present more Surinamese doctors in Holland than in Surinam. Nevertheless, every district has hospitals with limited resources.

Religion: A number of religious creeds can be found in Surinam, among which the most widespread are Hinduism (24%), Islam (23%) and Roman Catholicism (17%). But there are also the Dutch Reformed Church, the Lutheran Church, the Dutch Judaic Congregation, the Dutch-Portuguese Judaic Congregation and many other religious denominations and sects. The freedom of religion is constitutionally guaranteed, and some of the aforesaid religious communities maintain their own schools, hospitals and orphanages.

SWAZILAND




MOZAMBIQUE
MBABANE
INDIAN OCEAN
SOUTH AFRICA

Official name: The Kingdom of Swaziland (Nguane).
Area: 17,363 sq.km.
Borders: The country is almost completely surrounded by the Republic of South Africa except for the east where it borders on Mozambique.
Population: 530,000 inhabitants in 1979, of whom only 3% are not Africans. The annual rate of population growth was 3.4% in the period 1970-1974. More than 95% of the inhabitants belong to the Swazi ethnic group. There are also some 8,000 Europeans and 2,200 persons of mixed blood.
Capital: Mbabane (30,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Manzini, Hhonhho, Lubombo, and Shiselwani.
Languages: English and Siswati are official languages. There is also a Zulu-speaking minority.
Public holidays: September 6, Independence Day.
Geography: Swaziland, which is situated in southern Africa, has three distance geographical areas—the high, middle and low velds—all of them rocky and humid. However, humidity is highest in the hilly areas of the east and on the central plateau. In the east the climate is subtropical.

The high veld has the highest mountains, which reach an altitude of up to 1,800 m. The average elevation of the middle veld is 600 m and that of the low veld is 300 m. Running through the country are the rivers Komati, Umbeluzi, Usutu, and Konda.

Brief history: Today's inhabitants of the area along the Ponzolo and Usutu rivers originally lived on the south-eastern coast of southern Africa, but moved from there in the early 19th century.

The fertility of the soil, an abundance of game for hunting, and the possibility that there may be mineral resources under the ground attracted British colonists, who settled in Swaziland in 1878 and received many concesssions from the tribal chief of the Swazis. These concessions applied not only to the possession of land, mineral resources and forests, but also to the communication system and manufacture, and included the right to collect taxes. This situation brought about British control of the country. The first government in which the British took part was established in 1890 in a provisional form, which also included representation of Transvaal and of the Swazis. In 1894 South Africa took over the administration of the country without, however, incorporating it in its own territory. When the Boer War ended in 1902, the British Governor of Transvaal assumed administrative responsibility over Swaziland as a British Protectorate. This situation was the result of the fact that the Swazis preferred association with the British and a British protectorate to the violencand hostility of the Boers, who plundered their land, robbed them of their cattle and enslaved them.

The British colonialists, on the other hand, assumed a "paternalistic" attitude. Under a British decision adopted in 1907, administration of Swazi affairs was taken over by the High Commissioner for South Africa. One third of the country was placed under the jurisdiction of the British Crown and another third was set aside for European colonization. The Swazis protested to the British Government but in vain. The office of Paramount Chief (Ngweanyana) as the native authority was defined in 1941. In 1956 the head of the Swazi nation, King Sobhuza II—known as "The Lion" since 1921—demanded the restitution of his right to the country's mineral wealth but was turned down by the colonial government, although it had already reached similar agreements with the paramount chiefs of Bechuanaland and Basutoland.

In 1960 the government of the protectorate and the Swazi king appointed a Constitutional Committee which two years later published a report consolidating the economic and political rights of the European colonialists. In 1963 talks were held in London on a constitution that in its final version, simply re-affirmed the absence of any African rights and consolidated the executive power of the British commissioner.

Faced by growing protests from the political parties and a strike movement of the workers, the British government promised that the draft constitution would be modified. Another constitution was then drawn up, under which elections were held in 1964 to establish a Legislative Council. Three years later the people went to the polls to elect, for the first time, local councils, and on September 6, 1968, King Sobhuza II and his son, Prince Makhosini Dlamini, reached an agreement with the British, under which their protectorate of 70 years would end. However, the agreement represented no progress for the Swazi people. The colonialist constitution remained in effect and Anglo-American corporations continued to exploit and dominate the natural wealth of the country.

In April 1973 the king suspended the constitution, assumed all power in the country, and later appointed a royal commission for drawing up a new constitution. Although that document had been written, it has never been published.

At the same time, Sobhuza II placed himself at the service of the South African colonialists, whom his grandfather had fought. Swaziland's communications, post, transport, currency and banking are totally dependent on South Africa. South African enterprises exploit the asbestos and iron ore deposits of the country, and South African experts manage the kingdom's public administration, which ensures them more effective control. They also dominate agricultural production. Cotton, which is Swaziland's principal export item, is being sold through South African intermediaries. And since the Boers are highly puritanical, they established in Swaziland houses of prostitution and cabarets, which the strict and hypocritical official morality prohibits them from having at home.

Moreover, because Swaziland lacks sufficient employment opportunities, thousands of Swazi workers emigrate every year to work in the South African gold mines. The money they send back to their families constitutes 25% of all the foreign earnings of Swaziland.

In March 1976 Colonel Maphevu Dlamini was appointed to replace Prince Makhosini Dlamini as Prime Minister. The changes that have taken place in the south of Africa, in particular the independence of neighbouring Mozambique, forced King Sobhuza II to step up his repressive measures against opposition from different groups associated in the Ngwane National Liberation Congress (NNLC). The king announced in March 1977 the abolition of the parliamentary system and the institution of *Tinkhundia,* a traditional system of tribal communities, which is entirely reactionary.

In October 1977, for the first time in many years, the streets of Mbabane were filled with demonstrators expressing their opposition to the 79-year-old monarch. They were mostly students, who thus voiced their solidarity with their teachers striking for higher salaries. The government accused South African students who had fled to Swaziland after the Soweto massacre of having instigated the rebellion. However, concerned with its anti-democratic and anti-constitutional image abroad, the regime quickly drew up a new constitution and held elections in 1978, the results of which were rejected by the progressive Swazi opposition.

Nevertheless, the monarchy has tried to break out of its isolation and has recently taken conciliatory steps towards the so-called frontline African states, Mozambique in particular. It also adopted some positions similar to those of Lesotho and Malawi, whose governments have discredited themselves just as Swaziland with their traditional insensitivity to the system of apartheid.

Economy: According to World Bank figures, Swaziland's gross national product amounted to 310,000,000 dollars in 1978. The 1979 gross industrial production amounted to 220,000,000 dollars, having grown by 9.8% in that year. Agriculture, which employs 85% of the labour force, concentrated in 1975 on the production of sugar cane (more than 1,000,000 metric tons), maize, citrus fruit, cotton seed, and rice. Meat production amounted to 67,000 tons in 1976. However, the mining industry is in decline. It extracts iron ore, asbestos, coal and other minerals. Exports—mainly sugar, timber, iron ore and asbestos—amounted to 152,000,000 dollars in 1979, while imports amounted to 151,000,000 dollars. In 1979, the United States provided Swaziland with 6,200,000 dollars of aid. In 1977 living costs had risen to 193.2% of the 1970 level. The official currency is the lilangeni; its rate of exchange was 0.87 per U.S. dollar in 1978. At the end of the 1970s, Swaziland's external public debt approached 70,000,000 dollars. Although it is still a member of the South African Customs Union, which is controlled by the Republic of South Africa, Swaziland has joined the efforts made in 1980 towards regional economic integration by the independent countries of southern Africa under the leadership of the front line states.

Government: The king dissolved the government and imposed on the country an assembly based on the leadership of the tribal chiefs.

Swaziland is divided into four administrative districts, which are under the control of commissioners appointed by the king. There are also two municipalities—Mbane and Manzini.

Armed forces: In 1973 the king announced a plan for the formation of an army. According to 1975 information, its strength was 600 men. There are also several units of auxiliary police force.

Organizations: All political organizations were dissolved under a royal decree proclaimed in 1973.

The country's main political parties are the Swaziland Progressive Party, founded in 1960, the Swaziland United Front, which emerged in 1962, the Ngwane National Liberation Congress, which began functioning in 1962, and the Imbokodvo National Movement, founded in 1964.

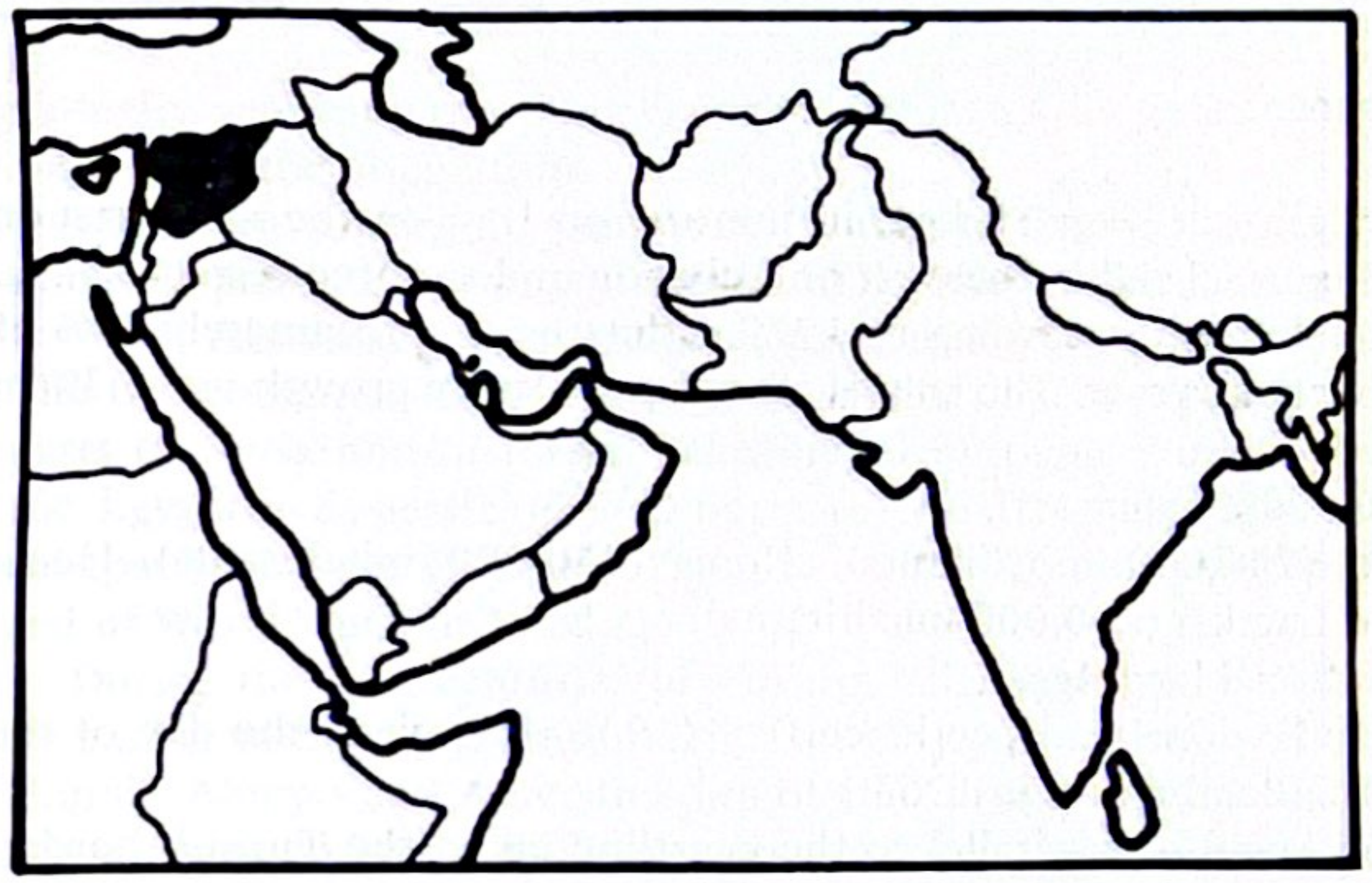
Education: The illiteracy rate in Swaziland is 64%. There are a total of 409 primary and secondary schools with an enrolment of 106,792 pupils. The country also has a university with 75 teachers and 460 students.

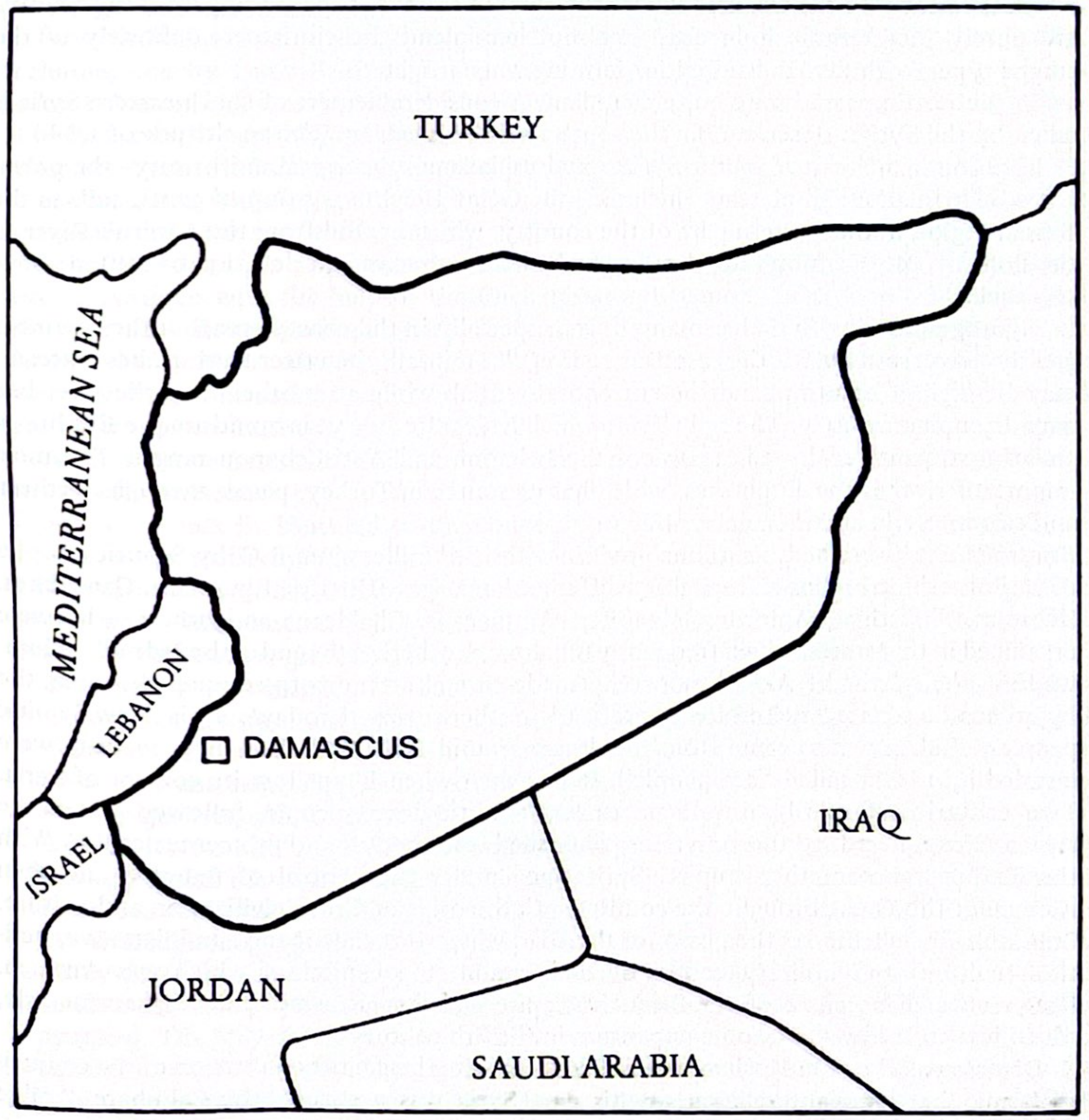
In the school-year 1973-1974, the educational budget amounted to 4,385,774 lilangenis.

Public health: The average life expectancy is estimated at 44 years. There is one hospital bed for every 269 inhabitants, while there is one doctor for every 8,888 inhabitants.

Religion: 43% of the population practise animist cults, while 50% are Christians. There are also about 500 Moslems.

SYRIA





Official name: The Syrian Arab Republic.
Area: 185,180 sq. km.
Borders: In the north Syria borders on Turkey, in the east on Iraq, in the south-east on Jordan, in the south-west on Israel and in the west on Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea.
Population: 8,860,000 inhabitants, according to 1979 estimates. Approximately 55% of the population live in the countryside. The annual rate of population growth was 3.3% in 1980.
Capital: Damascus (1,700,000 inhabitants),
Principal towns: Aleppo (740,000 inhabitants), Homs (350,000 inhabitants), Homa (260,000 inhabitants) and Latakia (200,000 inhabitants).
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: April 17, National Independence Day (1946); March 8, the day of the assumption of power by the Baath Party in 1963.
Geography: The Lebanon range runs parallel to the coastline up to the Turkish border, which is formed by the Orontes River. The climate and the crops in this part of the country are purely Mediterranean in character. Further inland the climate is definitely of the steppe type,, with the land suited for farming when irrigated.

In the north, pastures are quite abundant. A considerable part of south-eastern Syria is taken by the Syrian Desert and in the south rises the Jebel Druze to an altitude of 1,840 m.

The dominant feature of the Syrian landscape is morphological uniformity—the prevalence of highlands and plateaus, including the Golan Heights, a group of gentle hills in the Bassan region in the western part of the country, which extend from the Lamruk River to the slopes of Mt. Hermon (2,814 m) and which have the average elevation of 300 m above sea level.

Hydrographically, Syria has many rivers, especially in the coastal area, but their number greatly decreases towards the east. Due to irregular rainfall, the water level in these streams may be high at one time and the current torrential, while at another time the river bed may dry up completely. The only rivers which have water the year round are the Euphrates and the streams fed by the snows of the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon ranges. The most important river is the Euphrates, which has its source in Turkey, passes through northern and eastern Syria and then enters Iraq.
Brief history: Syria had been inhabited since the 3rd millennium B.C. by Semitic peoples of various ethnic origins and speaking different languages—Hittites, Egyptians, Canaanites, Hebrews, Philistines, Amorites, Moabites, Aramaeans, Chaldeans and others—who were organized in tiny states, which frequently fought each other. At the end of the 3rd millennium, while in the north the Akkad monarchy made several attempts to conquer that area, the Egyptians dominated the entire central and southern part of today's Syria. New Semitic peoples, the Amorites, came from the desert around 2000 B.C., but they, in turn, were invaded by the so-called "sea people". It was then when Egypt lost its control of Syria. Two centuries of rule by the Aramaeans, a Semitic desert people, followed. Later, the area was conquered by the Assyrians, who ruled it in the 9th and 8th centuries B.C. With the disappearance of that empire, Syria came under the control of Babylon and then Alexander the Great brought the country into the orbit of Greek civilization and culture. Still later, it came under the power of the Diadochs, who made it the administrative, political, cultural and military centre of their realm, the capital of which was Antioch.

Syria was the centre of the Seleucid empire and then it came under Byzantine rule, which was ended by the Islamic expansion in the 7th century A.D.

Damascus fell to the Moslem armies in 636 and thus began the conversion of the country to Islam, the dominant religion to this day. Syria was a part of the Caliphate, Arabic gradually replacing the other Semitic languages, and Islam began to be professed by the majority of the popualtion.

Under the Ommeids (661-750) Damascus was the capital of the Caliphate until the centre of political power was moved to Baghdad under Abbassid rule.

When Abbassid power declined, parts of Syria came under other spheres of influence. The Crusaders had settled over the years in different points along the coast and divided parts of Syria and historical Palestine into provinces under their control. Subsequently, the Egyptian dynasties joined Syria to their realm on two different occasions until its occupation by the Ottoman Turks in 1516, who made it a part of their empire until the end of World War I in 1918.

During the four centuries of Turkish rule, Syria was divided into four provinces ruled by pashas who were at the same time military governors. The four provinces were Damascus, Tripoli, Aleppo and Acre. In spite of the foreign domination, Syria enjoyed, at least for more than two and a half centuries, a certain degree of political independence from the central government in Istanbul.

Nevertheless, several uprisings in quest of independence took place during that period, including one by Emir Fakhreddine al Mani, who made himself independent in what is today Lebanon, but was then a part of historical Syria, and from there extended his power over Palestine, a part of Jordan, the Alawi mountains of Syria, and the Palmyra region. After the Turks had contained his rebellion, his successor, Bekhir Chehabi, tried in 1831, in coordination with Mohammed Ali, the governor of Egypt, to fight the Turks, but the conspiracy failed at the very beginning.

Subsequently, Ali's son Ibrahmim drove the Turks out of Syria, chasing them all the way to Antioch with the help of the Chehabists of Lebanon and Syrian soldiers drafted into the Turkish army. Under pressure from Great Britain and other European powers Ibrahim had to leave the country in 1840 after more than eight years of independence from the Turks. In order to achieve this, European warships bombared Syrian ports and landed troops in Saida, Byblos (Jbeil), Batroun and Acre on the Mediterranean coast.

After these events, the Turks restored their rule, which, however, never regained its former effectiveness.

Serious events in 1860 led to the concession of formal autonomy to Lebanon. Until then, a number of religious communities co-existed in that area, including the Maronites, a Christian sect that had inhabited the northern mountains for more than a century. The growth of the Maronites and their gradual expansion to the south, which was mostly under Druze control, caused grave social tension, which led to a civil war in 1860.

European troops invaded the country to help the Christians, whom they considered as valuable allies in those mostly Moslem areas, and a conference of European powers decided to form an autonomous province of Lebanon with a Christian governor. That province did not have the same shape as present-day Lebanon, since it did not include areas with Moslem majorities, such as those of Saida, the Bekaa Valley, Tripoli and Beirut.

Still under Turkish rule, a French-built railway was opened, linking Beirut, Damascus and Aleppo, and the well-known "pilgrimage railway" between Damascus and Medina on the Arabian Peninsula went into operation in 1895.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Arab nationalism was emerging in the lands ruled by the Turks. Attempts by the "Young Turks", who had come to power in 1908, to assimilate the Arab population provoked rebellious sentiments in Syria, which were harshly suppressed. On May 6, 1916, the Turkish military governor of Damascus, Jamil Pasha, ordered the execution of 12 patriots accused of insurgency, and on the same day 33 people were executed on the outskirts of Beirut. Lebanaon's autonomy was suppressed as a result of the rising wave of opposition to Turkish rule.

When World War I ended in 1918, Syria and Lebanon were occupied by Allied troops. Under British supervision, a French military administration was installed in Lebanon's coastal area, while an Arab administration was established in Damascus, headed by Feisal, a son of King Hussein—who had led a popular uprising against the Turks, helped the Allied troops, and seized Damascus on October 1, 1918.

The French mandate over Syria was strongly opposed in the country. The intention of the French to perpetuate their presence on the strategic coast of the Eastern Mediterranean clashed with the upsurge of nationalist and independence sentiments among the people of Syria. In March 1920 a congress held in Damascus proclaimed Feisal the king of united Syria, but this move was rejected by the Western powers at the San Remo conference a month later. The European powers granted the mandate over the entire territory to France, which sent an ultimatum to Feisal in June and immediately occupied Damascus and the rest of the country. The League of Nations approved the mandate in 1923, but even before that happened, the French had begun to organize Syrian territory in accordance with their colonial interests. The State of Great Lebanon was proclaimed in 1920, which included the Bekaa Valley and the coastal areas that earlier had not been included in the autonomous province under Turkish rule. The formation of the Republic of Lebanon was announced in 1926, which continued to exist under French tutelage until its independence some years later.

The rest of the territory was administratively divided by the French also with a view to religious factors.

In 1936, confronted by the continued opposition to the colonial character of the French administration, the Popular Front government in France promised that the two states—Syrian and Lebanese—would be admitted to the League of Nations and that Syria would be re-unified, but these promises were not honoured by subsequent French governments.

In 1939 the constitution was suspended in Syria. The colonial authorities supported the Vichy government, so British and Free French forces occupied the country in 1941.

On September 28, 1941, General Catroux declared Syria's formal independence in Damascus, but failed to meet the nationalist demands. Elections were held in 1943, which were won both in Syria and in Lebanon by candidates opposing the French mandate. In 1945 the people rose up in arms against the French as well as the British, who acted in support of the extension of the French mandate by bombing Damascus in order to suppress a popular uprising. In April 1946 Syria became the first Arab country to win its political independence, when the full sovereignty of the Syrian state was proclaimed.

At the time of the withdrawal of the foreign troops in 1946, the country had been governed since 1943 by Shukri Quwalti, the leader of the National Party.

Three coups d'etat—in March, August and December 1949—culminated with the shooting of the dictator Husni Al-Zaim, who had seized power in March 1949, dissolved parliament and banned all political parties. After a new coup led by Colonel Sami Hinnawi, and a third one, led by another colonel, Adib Shishakli, the first constitution was finally promulgated—on Septmber 5, 1950—under which the country was organized as a republic headed by a President who was to govern with the assistance of a Chamber of Deputies.

In 1951 Shishakli, who had ceded power to a new government, led yet another coup, which forced the resignation of the then President Al Atassi. Parliament was dissolved and Shishakli became both Premier and chief-of-staff of the armed forces. In 1953, after the adoption of a new constitution in a public referendum, Shishakli was elected President and Premier for a term of five years.

In 1954, after the outbreak of an uprising in Jebel Druze and after signs of opposition inside the armed forces, Shishakli was forced to leave the country, and after a short period of confusion Al Atassi returned to the presidency.

With Shishakli out of the country, the 1950 constitution was re-introduced and elections were held in September 1954 to fill the 142 seats of the Chamber of Deputies, but none of the then existing political organizations won a clear majority.

In 1955 Syria, Egypt and Saudi Arabia announced the formation of a joint defence and economic organization. In the same year Shukri Quwatli was elected President when Al Atassi's term of office had expired. The next year, following the French and British intervention in the events surrounding the nationalization of the Suez Canal, Syria broke off relations with the two Western powers. In October of the same year a commercial and customs union agreement was signed with Jordan, which was then trying to extricate itself from the sphere of British influence.

In 1957 the Syrian government announced its resolute opposition to the Eisenhower Doctrine, which found its principal supporter in Saudi Arabia, and declared that the United States had no right whatsoever to send troops to intervene in Arab countries. The government also announced in March of the same year that a petroleum refinery was to be built in Homs under its auspices and with Czechoslovak technical assistance. In September Syria had to face a campaign inspired by the United States and aimed at subverting its political independence, as well as at undermining its relations with the neighbouring Arab states. At the same time Syria was being militarily menaced by Turkey, a faithful American ally in the region.

On February 2, 1958, Syria's President Quwatli and President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt announced the formation of the United Arab Republic made up of their two countries and governed by a joint parliament and cabinet. A referendum held on February 21, almost unanimously approved this project and the election of Nasser as the President of the new state. This union functioned for thee years until a group of officers, led by Mamoun Al Kuzbari, demanded in a military ultimatum its dissolution. Next year, a coalition of rightist political parties assumed power and abolished many of the agrarian reform measures and other reforms adopted in the previous period. The new government was headed by President Nazim al Qudsi. However, he was overthrown by a military coup in March 1962, when a new government was formed by Bashir al Azma.

The unending succession of governments, which seriously undermined the constitutional life of the country, was ended on March 8, 1963, when the Arab Socialist Renaissance (Baath) Party took power and formed a Revolutionary Command Council and a cabinet in which other political forces were also represented.

The Baath Party had played an important role in Syrian parliamentary life and had a large popular base as well as internal cohesion.

In July 1963 the government foiled a coup staged by supporters of the unionist idea. Earlier, in April, a provisional constitution was proclaimed.

In May 1964 the Revolutionary Command Council turned over the supreme government authority to a five-man Presidential Council headed by General Amin Hafiz as President and with Salah Bitar as Vice-President.

In October Bitar was stripped of his office and General Hafiz assumed the post of head of government while retaining his presidency of the National Council as well as of the Presidential Council. In the latter body, General Salah Jedid and Youssef Zuayyen replaced Bitar and Mansour El Attrache. General Hafiz then formed a cabinet of 22 members, the majority of them belonging to the Baath Party.

The new government declared all the country's petroleum and other mineral resources public property and prohibited the granting of any concessions to foreign companies. At the beginning of January 1965 it decreed the nationalization of 114 industrial enterprises as well as banks and insurance companies. At the same time, the 1958 Agrarian Reform Law was amended to become the most radical of its kind in the Middle East.

The right-wing forces once again conspired to impede the process of socialization of the national economy, with the objective of overthrowing the Hafiz government.

A new National Revolutionary Council was established in August 1965, consisting of 95 members and including representatives of regional and national committees of the Baath Party, of the military committee, of trade unions, peasant organizations, women's and student organizations, as well as representatives of professional groups. The National Council, whose task was to draw up and submit to a referendum the definite constitution of the Syrian Arab Republic, was led by Hafiz, who ceded the premiership to Yusef Zuayyen in September 1965.

The regional leadership of the Baath Party assumed power on February 23, 1966, by a military coup which overthrew the government of Salah Bitar—who had occupied the premiership for the fifth time in the summer of 1965, when he replaced Zuayyen—and deposed the president of the Presidential Council, General Amin Hafiz.

The regional leadership of the Baath Party formed a new cabinet on March 1, with Yusef Zuayyen as Premier. For the first time in Syria's history the Communist Party was represented in the government. Nureddin Attassi was appointed President of the Republic.

At the end of 1966 Premier Zuayyen went to the Soviet Union, which offered his country a loan of 50,000,000 dollars—subsequently raised—for the construction of a dam on the Euphrates River. The dam was the largest in Syria and its most important economic development project.

On June 6, 1967, Israel attacked the Arab countries for the third time and its troops occupied Syria's strategic Golan Heights. The U.N. Security Council met in an emergency session to consider the situation in the Middle East and in a resolution adopted two days after the outbreak of the conflict called for a cease-fire. On the same day, i.e., on June 8, the Egyptian government of President Nasser accepted the cease-fire in principle. This greatly eased the pressure on the northern front and the Israeli troops had the possibility to strengthen the southern front. Israeli planes did not discriminate between military and civilian targets, and the Syrian capital, Damascus, was subjected to heavy bombing.

On June 10, the Syrian government, too, accepted the cease-fire ordered by the United Nations. Nevertheless, the Israeli army pursued its attack and consolidated its positions on the Golan Heights. Two days later large Israeli paratroop units tried to cut off the southern sector of Damascus, but failed because of resistance put up by the Syrian army and people.

The Arab position in this war had a profound impact on Syrian public opinion.

A reconstruction movement led by General Hafiz Al Assad scored a victory in November 1970, and Assad proclaimed the formation of a new regional leadership of the Baath Party, which adopted a programme declaration providing a framework for the country's political and economic development.

Hafiz Assad's ascent to power ensured adequate preparation of the Syrian armed forces, which was demonstrated in the fourth Arab-Israeli war in October 1973. Hafiz Assad was confirmed in his office as President of the Syrian Arab Republic in a popular referendum in March 1971.

The fifth regional congress of the Baath Party in Syria, held in May 1971, pointed to the necessity of accelerating "the stages of development towards socialist transformation in different fields". The congress also initiated the formation of a united front including all the political parties, among them the Communist Party.

The government published the draft of a constitution which provided the basis for the National Progressive Front. This Front is the first political coalition of its kind since the victory of the Baath Party in 1963 and includes besides that party also the Arab Socialist Union, the Unionist Socialist Party, the Arab Socialist Movement and the Communist Party.

The democratization process in Syria culminated in March 1973, when a third popular referendum approved the new constitution. The second referendum had been held in 1971 on the formation of the Federation of Arab States, consisting of Egypt, Syria and Lebanon. However, that project subsequently failed because of a divergence of opinion and criteria between the three governments.

The new constitution was approved by 97.6% of the voters. It replaced the 1950 constitution and declared that the Syrian Arab Republic was a socialist democracy. It endowed the President, whose term of office is seven years, with the authority to appoint and recall the Vice-President, the Prime Minister and the members of the cabinet. The head of state may also discharge the duties of commander-in-chief of the armed forces, of the Secretary-General of the Baath Party, and of the chairman of the Progressive National Front.

Elections were held in May 1973 to elect members of the Syrian People's Council (i.e., the parliament). These elections were the first after 12 years.

On October 6, 1973, the fourth war against Israel broke out simultaneously along the Syrian and Egyptian fronts. This time the Egyptian and Syrian military commands acted in coordination in launching the war, which lasted 17 days. In this conflict Egypt and Syria demonstrated their military superiority. The Israeli air force, which on previous occasions had asserted itself as the key factor in Israeli combat operations, suffered heavy losses.

The U.N. Security Council ordered a cease-fire in the Middle East on October 22, 1973, but the cessation of hostilities took effect only three days later, due to the intransigence of Israel, which wanted to improve its military positions in order to make up, in part, for its reverses and to restore the myth of its military invincibility.

Egypt accepted the cease-fire on October 22, thereby repeating the situation from the preceding war, when the Israeli army was given the possibility to shift the bulk of its forces to the Golan Heights with the objective of advancing towards Damascus. The Syrian capital, protected by a dense network of anti-aircraft rockets, was strongly attacked by Israeli planes, which indiscriminately bombed economic and civilian targets. The Israeli air force suffered heavy losses in these raids against Syria's main urban centres because of the defending rockets.

On May 29, 1974, a military disengagement agreement for the Golan Heights was signed, under which the Israeli troops were to withdraw from Kuneitra, the provincial capital. Kuneitra, later renamed the "Martyr City", is one of the oldest urban settlements in the world, but was left totally destroyed after the Israeli troops had dynamited, bulldozed and otherwise levelled down all the structures of this community of 70,000 inhabitants.

In 1974 and 1975 President Hafiz Assad made two visits to the Soviet Union and other socialist countries. He also travelled to Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait in what might be considered a diplomatic opening with respect to the Arab states, to which he explained Syria's position on the problem of the Near East. The visits to the Soviet Union were designed to consolidate Soviet-Syrian cooperation in the economic and political spheres.

In August 1975 the Baath Party held its sixth regional congress, which defined Syria's defence and economic development as the key and most pressing tasks of the nation. The final document adopted by the congress described the battle against "the Zionist enemy as a national struggle of anti-imperialist character, in which there should be no place for internal differences among the Arab nations". The congress also reiterated the unconditional support by the Baath Party of the Palestinian people and their right to form their national state.

Elections were held in 1976 to the People's Council, whose term of office is four years, which has 195 members, and whose competence includes legislative authority, outline of the government's policy and election of the candidate for the presidency, who is to be nominated by the leadership of the Baath Party. The National Progressive Front won 160 seats in the elections.

On August 1, 1976, Abdel Rahman Kleifaoui was appointed Prime Minister, replacing Mahmud Ayubi, who had held the post since 1972.

General elections took place on February 8, 1978. The Baath Party chose as its candidate Hafiz Assad, and this choice was approved by parliament. In the elections Assad received close to 95% of the ballots and was thus re-elected for another term of seven years. More than 4,000,000 voters took part in the elections in the 15 provinces into which the country is administratively divided.

The government of Prime Minister Mohammed Ali al Halabi was appointed in 1978.

In September of that year the Syrian government denounced the separate agreements signed by Egypt and Israel at Camp David under United States auspices. On September 20, members of the Front of Steadfastness—a group of progressive Arab countries opposed to Egypt's policy of surrender to Israel—met in Damascus.

1979 saw stepped-up activities against the government by the Moslem Brotherhood, which, under the pretext of religious orthodoxy, carries out terrorist acts clearly related to the reaction evoked in some Arab circles by the resolute anti-imperialist policy pursued by the Syrian government.

In September 1979 the National Progressive Front called for an end to terrorism and the following month President Assad signed two decrees aimed at strengthening the fight against administrative corruption, another of the ills combated by his government.

In 1979 and 1980 President Assad again visited the Soviet Union. During his second visit there, in October 1980, he signed a 20-year treaty of friendship and cooperation between the two countries, which, in 15 articles, underlines their decision to strengthen their political, economic, military and cultural relations and to increase Syria's defence capacity in particular. The treaty went into effect in December of that year after having been ratified by the Syrian parliament.

In January 1980 the Baath Party held its seventh congress in Damascus and re-elected Assad as its Secretary-General. It adopted a number of resolutions designed to strengthen the government's capacity to cope with terrorist activities inside the country.

After the congress, a new cabinet was appointed, consisting of 37 members representing different political forces. It is headed by Abdul Rauf al Kyasn, the former mayor of Damascus.

Economy: Syria's economy is basically agricultural in character, although in recent years petroleum has become the main export article.

Roughly 45% of Syria's territory (some 8,700,000 hectares) is potentially cultivable. About 70% of this area is effectively exploited and agriculture provides employment for approximately half of Syria's labour force. According to 1977 data, it accounts for one fifth of the country's GNP.

There are four main farming areas in Syria. The first one is a narrow strip of land on the coast between the Lebanese and Turkish frontiers, where fruit, olives, tobacco and cotton are grown, besides other products. The second area is a plain in the central part of the country, where most of the grain is produced and which is considered to be Syria's breadbasket. The third area is the valley of the Orontes River in the west, and the last one is the Jezina region east of the Euphrates, where cotton is grown on a large scale.

Syria's principal crops include cotton, the most important agricultural export product, of which 394,800 tons were produced in 1978 and which was planted on more than 160,000 hectares the next year. There are many cotton-processing plants in the country, and cotton was expected to account for 75% of the total output of Syria's manufacturing industry.

Of the other major crops, Syria produced in 1978: 1,650,696 tons of wheat, 728,695 tons of barley, 501,968 tons of tomatoes, 345,775 tons of citrus fruit, 303,677 tons of olives, and 273,300 tons of beet sugar (1977).

The 1977 livestock statistics included 639,000 head of cattle and 7,070,000 goats, as well as some 8,700,000 poultry. The latter produced close to 700 million eggs in more than a dozen large-scale poultry farms built with Hungarian assistance.

Agricultural development in Syria is closely tied with a number of irrigation projects, which have been the recipients of the largest investments in the past decade. The major of these projects is the construction of a dam on the Euphrates, covered by two five-year plans—1971-1975 and 1976-1980—but on which work had been initiated already in 1968. The objectives of this ambitious project include generation of electric power (800,000 kW), irrigation of more than 640,000 hectares of land in the final stage and flood control. In 1980 already more than 240,000 hectares of land were irrigated thanks to the large dam which had been built with Soviet assistance and whose power plant was completed in 1979.

Another important dam is being built on the Al Kebir Al Shemali River, near the port of Latakia. Construction began in 1978 and is expected to be completed in 1982, when the reservoir behind the dam will irrigate some 14,000 hectares of land. Other irrigation projects are being planned in connection with the construction of two dams on the Yarmuk and Ghab rivers.

Exploitation of petroleum on a commercial scale began in 1968. Earlier it was believed that Syria had no petroleum resources of any significance. The Western oil monopoly, the Iraq Petroleum Company, held concessions on prospecting for petroleum in Syria, but gave them up in 1951. However, five years later, in 1956, the first deposits were discovered at Karachuk, in the north-eastern part of the country, and then in other places, but the quantities did not warrant commercial exploitation. Although it had extracted hardly any petroleum, Syria became, in 1964, the first Middle Eastern Arab country to nationalize its petroleum industry, which in that year was placed under the control of the state-run General Petroleum Authority.

In 1968 approximately 1,000,000 tons were extracted, but by 1976, when new wells sunk at Suweidiya went into operation, output had risen to more than 10,000,000 tons annually. Since then, the government has been pursuing a policy of limiting exploitation and of conserving this natural wealth. The 1978 output was 9,924,000 tons and in 1979 production was cut down to 8,940,000 tons.

At present, prospecting for petroleum is carried out on an area of 75,000 square miles, and exploration is also under way for off-shore deposits.

Syria's proven petroleum reserves do not exceed 1,300,000,000 tons, a fact which calls for a continuation of the government's conservation policy. The principal consumers of Syrian oil include Greece, France and Italy.

There are two oil refineries in the country. One at Homs, with an annual capacity of 2,500,000 tons, which was destroyed by Israel during the 1973 war, but was put back into operation in 1975, the other at Banias, on the Mediterranean coast, which was completed with Rumanian assistance in 1979 and which has an annual processing capacity of 6,000,000 tons.

An oil pipeline from Iraq has its terminal at Banias (see under Iraq—Economy) and another pipeline, also from Iraq, runs through Syria to the Lebanese port of Tripoli. The Tapline, which carries crude oil from Saudi Arabia to the Saida refinery in the south of Lebanon, crosses some 200 km of Syrian territory. Syria derives considerable income from servicing these pipelines, although, because of recurrent regional crises, the flow of petroleum through these pipelines has been frequently interrupted in recent years.

Other minerals that are of some importance for the Syrian economy are phosphates (747,000 tons in 1978) and salt (62,000 tons in 1978).

Diversification of industry is one of the principal objectives of Syrian economic development plans. In 1977 industry accounted for 21.5% of Syria's GNP.

It was expected that 6,000,000 tons of cement would be produced in 1980 with the completion of new cement mills at Tartus, Aleppo, Hama and Adra. Hama is also the site of an iron and steel plant (Syria has reserves of some 530,000,000 tons of iron ore). Production of phosphate and nitrogen fertilizers is concentrated at Homs, Hama and Deir al Zhor. Four new sugar mills went into operation in 1980 for processing sugar beet. Other important industries are those of textiles, rubber, glass and paper. The main industrial centres are Damascus, Aleppo, Homs and Latakia.

Syria's fourth five-year plan, covering the period 1976-1980, provided for investments of 44,777,000 Syrian pounds. The largest investments went to the completion of the Euphrates dam (7,349,000 Syrian pounds), industrial diversification (9,889,000 Syrian pounds), energy and petroleum development (7,968,000 Syrian pounds) and irrigation projects (1,095,000 Syrian pounds).

The government is also engaged in a major effort to develop the tourist industry, which is expected to raise substantially its present level. 1,290,000 tourists visited Syria in 1977.

The principal port in Syria is Latakia, which received 2,023 ships in 1977. There are 1,196 km of railways, which figure does not include the Hejaz railway, of which 301 km run through Syrian territory. There were 6,000 km of paved roads in 1979, and 7,300 km of other roads. The merchant fleet had the total tonnage of 7,531 BRT in 1975.

Syria's foreign trade suffers from a major deficit in spite of the income from petroleum. Thus, in 1978 exports were worth 4,159,800 Syrian pounds, while the value of imported goods was 9,658,700 Syrian pounds. Syria's principal commercial partners are members of the European Economic Community, which in that year accounted for 46.7% of the total Syrian foreign trade. In 1977 the European socialist countries received 25% of Syria's exports and supplied 20% of its imports.

The national budget for 1979 amounted to 22,641,000 Syrian pounds. The 1978 GNP stood at 7,490,000,000 dollars. The national currency is the Syrian pound, whose rate of exchange in December 1979 was 3.95 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The 1973 constitution defines Syria as a democratic and socialist republic with a planned, socialist economy.

The President is elected directly by the people by secret ballot and under universal suffrage for a term of seven years. He appoints the Vice-President and Prime Minister. He is the head of the executive branch of government, while legislative power is vested in a People's Council (i.e., a single chamber parliament) elected every four years. It has 195 members, whose competence includes the enactment of laws, approval of government policy and election of the presidential candidate, who must be approved in general elections.

Armed forces: Military expenditure forms the major part of the national budget in view of the military effort the country must make in order to secure its defence against possible Israeli aggression. In 1979 this expenditure amounted to 8,236,200 Syrian pounds.

It is estimated that the total strength of the Syrian armed forces is 227,500 members, of whom 200,000 serve in the army (100,000 in reserve), 2,500 in the navy, and 25,000 in the air force.

Paramilitary forces number some 9,500 men, 8,000 of them serving as gendarmes and 1,500 as frontier guards.

Military service is compulsory for men and the training period is 30 months.

Organizations: The Baath Party was founded in 1943. It held its first congress in 1947, and it was this meeting that initiated an important unifying movement in the Arab world. President Assad is also the Secretary-General of the Syrian Baath Party.

The National Progressive Front, founded in March 1972, is made up of the following parties: the Arab Socialist Movement and the Socialist Unionist Movement.

As for trade-union organizations, there is the General Federation of Workers' Unions, made up of ten federations of workers from different sectors of the national economy.

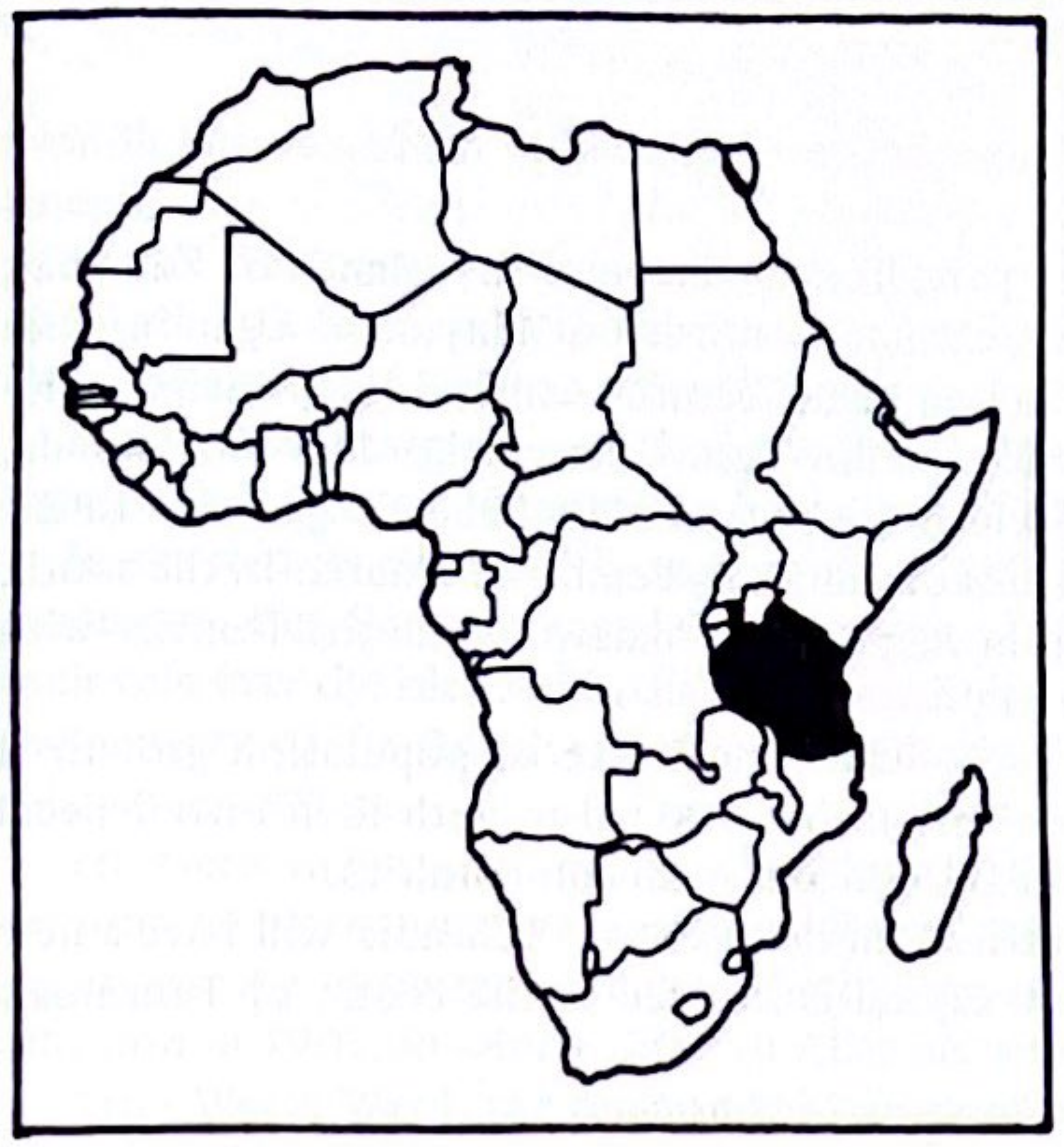
There are also many social and mass organizations.

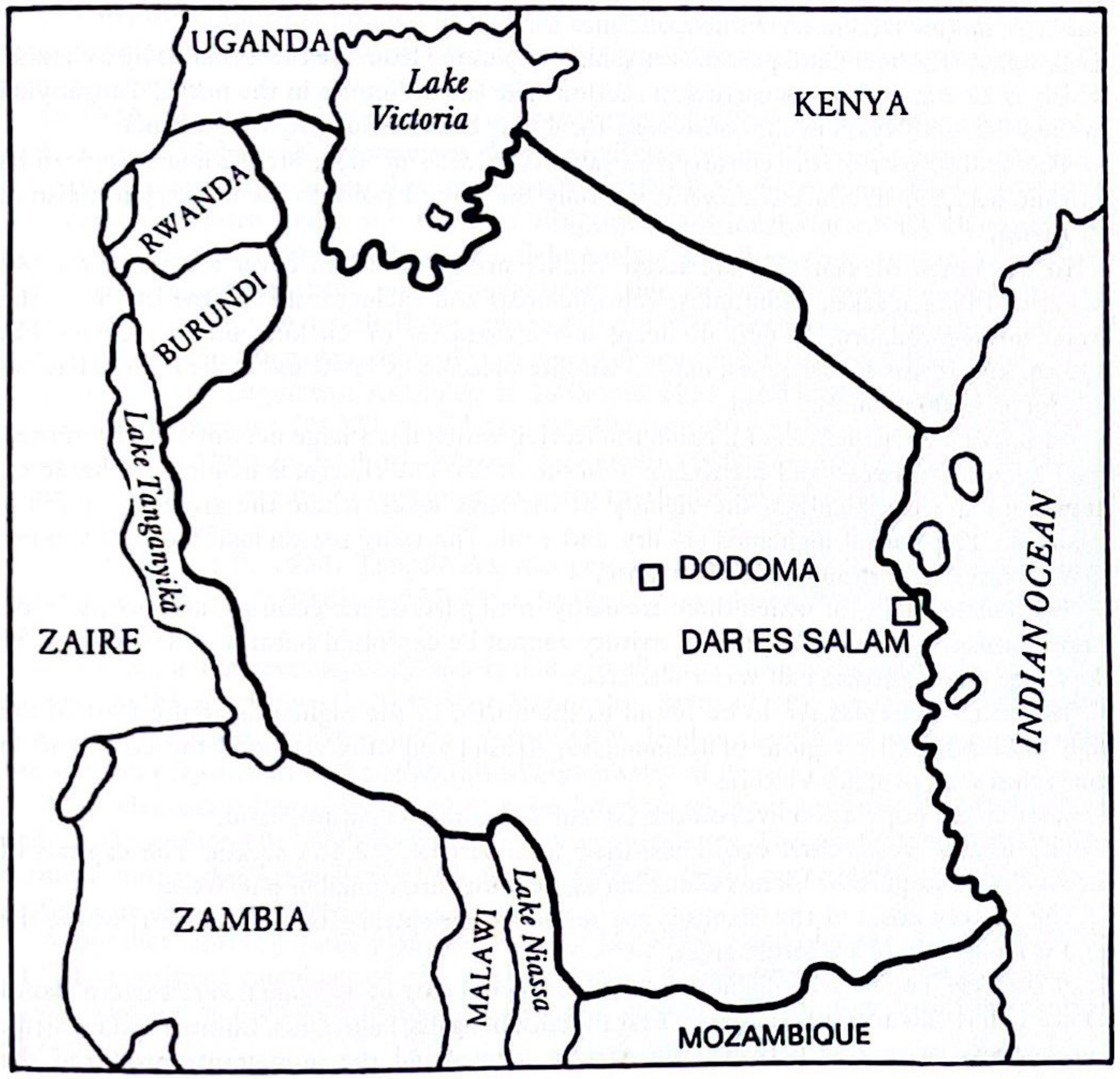
Education: Primary education for children six to 14 years old is compulsory and free. In 1977, more than 1,320,000 pupils attended primary schools, 362,670 pupils attended preparatory schools, and 144,485 students were enrolled in secondary schools. There are three universities—in Damascus, Aleppo and Tishrin—with the total enrolment of more than 63,000 students. The illiteracy rate among the adult population was 47% in 1976.

Public health: There is one doctor for every 3,850 inhabitants and one hospital bed for every 714 inhabitants, but under the development plans the latter index was expected to have been lowered to 602 in 1980.

Religion: The majority of the Syrian population are Moslems of the Sunni branch (82%). There are also Shi'ite Moslems, as well as Ismaeli and Alawi Moslems. Other religious minorities include Druzes and—among Christians—members of the Greek Orthodox and Greek Catholic churches.

TANZANIA




UGANDA
Lake Victoria
KENYA
RWANDA
BURUNDI
Lake Tanganyika
DODOMA
DAR ES SALAM
INDIAN OCEAN
ZAIRE
ZAMBIA
MALAWI
Lake Niasa
MOZAMBIQUE

Official name: The United Republic of Tanzania.
Area: 945,203 sq.km.
Borders: Tanzania consists of a mainland part, Tanganyika, and the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia. Its mainland part borders in the north on Kenya and Uganda, with both of which it has a natural frontier, and on Lake Victoria, which is the principal communication link with those two countries. In the west Tanzania borders on Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire, from the territory of which it is separated by Lake Tanganyika. In the east is the Indian Ocean and in it the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia. In the south, a mountain range separates Tanzania from Zambia and Malawi, while the frontier with Mozambique is formed by the River Ruvuna.
Population: 16,070,000 inhabitants in 1977. The annual rate of population growth is 2.8%. Tanzania's population is made up of more than 100 tribes, with their own dialects and customs, as well as of European, Indi-Pakistani and Arab communities.
Capital: Dar-es-Salaam. Acording to an official announcement, Tanzania will have a new capital, Dodoma, from 1987. This future capital is situated in the centre of Tanzania's mainland territory.
Principal towns: Arusha, Moshi, Zanzibar, Tanga and Mwanza.
Languages: Swahili is the official language. English and Arabic are also spoken.
Public holidays: December 9, Independence Day (1961).
Geography: The mainland part of Tanzania is separated from the three islands by a channel which is 22 km wide in its narrowest section. The lakes Victoria in the north, Tanganyika in the west, and Nyasa in the south-west form long coasts belonging to Tanzania.

The central part of the country is a tableland 1,216 m high. Mt. Kilimanjaro with its altitude of 5,963 m above sea level is not only the highest point in the country but also in all Africa.

In the north of Tanzania are seven wildlife preserves, which cover a total of 68,288 sq. km of plains, lakes, mountains, volcanic areas and extinct craters. One of these, the crater of Ngorongoro, is 610 m deep, has a diameter of 16 km, and its surface has 539 sq. km. It was set aside as a natural wildlife preserve in 1940 and is the natural habitat of some 25,000 animals.

Tanzania's principal rivers include the Rufiyi, which has a large network of tributaries, the Kagera in the west, and the Kalambo in the south. The climate is tropical in character, humid on the coast and in the vicinity of the large lakes, where the greatest rainfall is recorded. The central highlands are dry and cool. The rainy season lasts from November to May practically throughout the country.

The smaller lakes, of which there are many in all parts of the country, are mostly salty. Approximately 70% of Tanzania's territory cannot be exploited because of infestation by the tsetse fly and absence of water resources.

The cultivable areas are to be found in the north, in the highlands at the foot of the high mountains (the regions of Kilimanjaro, Arusha and others), along the coast and in the region west of Lake Victoria.

Most of the population lives on the 10% of Tanzania's cultivable land.

The islands are of coral origin and their total surface is 2,461 sq.km. The capitals of the two most important islands (Zanzibar and Pemba) are Zanzibar and Wete.

The eastern coast of the islands is not suited for agriculture, but in the west, where the land is higher, there are fertile areas.
Brief history: The native inhabitants of the mainland part of Tanzania were eastern Bantu tribes. Later, this area was visited by East Indians, Bengalis, Pakistanis, Chinese and Persians. The process of mixing between the African natives and the immigrants produced the Swahili cuture, which eventually spread along the entire eastern coast of the African continent.

In the 8th century Persians and Moslem Arabs established tiny states along the coast. An Arab sultanate, which had its centre on Zanzibar, flourished from the 13th century until the arrival of German colonizers.

Portuguese navigators reached the area in the 15th century in the quest of bases for their trade with Asia. Eventually, however, the Arabs forced them to withdraw.

In the middle of the 19th century, after having explored the eastern coast of the African continent, the Germans concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Zanzibar and established their rule over the island of Mafia and the mainland territory of Tanganyika. This provoked the concern of the British and the French, both of whom were also interested in dominating this part of Africa.

The German occupation (1885-1918) ran into stubborn resistance. The native population demonstrated on numerous occasions that it would not conform to the will of the German occupiers. An important event in the history of Tanzania was undoubtedly the Maji-Maji rebellion in 1905, in which 120,000 Africans were killed by the Germans.

After World War I, the territory of Tanganyika was placed under a British mandate and after World War II became a trust territory.

The British colonizers applied a method of indirect government through a so-called native administration, but there were constant demonstrations of resistance against the foreign presence.

In 1929, African intellectuals in the country formed the Tanganyika African Association (TAA). In 1953 Julius K.Nyerere was elected chairman of the TAA and decided to change the organization into a political party that would strive for independence. On July 7, 1954, this party was born under the name of Tanganyika National Union (TANU) and in its statutes raised the following objectives: fight against tribalism, construction of a nation, attainment of a democratic government, promotion of African economic and cultural development, rejection of all forms of racism and discrimination and establishment of close ties between the party and trade union and cooperative organizations.
Elections to the Legislative Assembly in 1958 and 1959 produced two victories for the nationalist movement. TANU candidates won 29 of the 30 seats in the Assembly. In elections held in 1960 to establish internal autonomy, TANU, running aginst the United Tanganyika Party, set up as an oppostion party by the British government, won 70 of the 71 contested seats.

On December 9, 1961, Tanganyika was granted independence and Julius K.Nyerere became the country's first Prime Minister. In 1962 he was elected President of the Republic of Tanganyika.

In Zanzibar the revolutionary movement gained strength in 1956 with the formation to two political parties—the Zanzibar Nationalist Party (ZNP), representing the ruling Arab minority, and the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP), led by Abeid Karume and representing the African majority as well as the Shirazi community of Persian origin.

After electoral manoeuvres by the British interests on the islands, the ZNP took power and on December 10, 1963, Zanzibar got its independence. The government was a constitutional monarchy again headed by Sultan Said, who had exercised his mandate under British rule since World War II.

A popular uprising took place on January 12, 1964, staged by the African majority and impoverished members of the Arab minority. A new government was formed with Abeid Karume as President of the Republic and chairman of the Revolutionary Council of Zanzibar.

The new, revolutionary government of Zanzibar adopted measures designed to frustrate the imperialist machinations. Somewhat later, relations were broken off with the United States because of American attempts to interfere in the country's internal affairs.

The People's Republic of Zanzibar was proclaimed on January 12, 1964, and on April 22 of the same year the government of Tanganyika announced that by mutual accord, the two countries would merge into a single state.

The National Assembly of Tanganyika and the Revolutionary Council of Zanzibar ratified the agreement, and, on April 27, 1964, the United Republic of Tanganyika and Zanzibar was constituted. Later it adopted the name of the United Republic of Tanzania and comprises the mainland territory of Tanganyika and the islands of Zanzibar, Pemba and Mafia. Both parts enjoy the same political conditions and complete internal autonomy.

On July 5, 1965, Tanzania became officially a "democratic state with a single party"—TANU on the mainland and ASP on the islands.

The policy pursued by the Tanzanian government follows the TANU programme and the Declaration of Arusha (1967), which stipulates that the party's goal is the construction of a socialist state, for which purpose it is necessary that the basic means of production should be controlled by the peasants and workers, and that exploitation of man by man should be eliminated.

After Tanganyika and Zanzibar had united, Nyerere was proclaimed President of the United Republic of Tanzania. As the only candidate in the 1965 presidential election, he obtained almost 100% of the votes and thus began a new term of office on October 1 of that year. Since then, Nyerere has been returned to office in elections held in 1970 and 1975.

After the Arusha Declaration of 1967, Tanzania underwent great economic and social changes, which paved the way for the merger of TANU and the Afro-Shirazi Party that was to give a new impetus to the consolidation of the development process. This merger took palce in 1977, and the two political organizations formed the Revolutionary Party of Tanzania (Shama Sha Mapinduzi). The statutes of the new party were adopted on the 10th anniversary of the Arusha Declaration, which document had been used by both former parties—even prior to their merger—as a guideline for the country's non-capitalist development.

The new political party held its first national conference in October 1977. Its agenda included: the election of a National Executive Committee (of 40 members—20 from Tanganyika and 20 from Zanzibar) which, in turn, would elect members of the Central Committee; consideration of the draft statutes of five mass organizations affiliated with the party, and the organizational structure of the party, initiated with the election of its governing bodies in the individual regions and districts of the country.

An event of major impact on the life of Tanzania in the recent period was the war against the regime of Idi Amin Dada in Uganda between November 1978 and April 1979. Relations between the two neighbouring countries had grown tense ever since Milton Obote, overthrown by Amin in February 1971, was granted asylum in Dar-es-Salaam. Clashes between the armed forces of Uganda and Tanzania occurred in 1974, when Amin took as a pretext Nyerere's aid to Obote's followers. When the East African Community of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania broke up in 1977, it was mainly due to the growing deterioration of relations between Kampala and Dar-es-Sallam.

The war, which broke out in November 1978 as a result of provocations by the Ugandan regime and ended with the fall of Amin and the institution of a national front government in Uganda, cost Tanzania about 1,000,000 dollars a day. Addressing a Rally of Tanzanian Heroes in September 1979, President Nyerere declared that the next 18 months would be very difficult for the country's economy. He pointed to the need of cutting petroleum consumption (petroleum imports account for 45% of the country's foreign-exchange expenditure) and called for a major effort to raise production levels. He reported that 20,000 soldiers had been repatriated from the Ugandan front and that the return of the remaining troops—still in the neighbouring country aiding its new government in its effort to end the lack of security and the crime prevalent since the Amin era—would be speeded up. According to Nyerere, 408 Tanzanian soldiers had died in the war.

Tanzania's problems were reflected particularly in the results of the five-year plan for the period 1976-1981, which had stressed industrial development, increase in production, and some concessions to the private economic sector. A new economic policy was announced in May 1980, to be carried out under a new development plan for the period 1980-1981, with the objective of attaining financial stability, raising exports and increasing industrial output with the help of a new sytem of bonuses and sanctions. A general adjustment of wages and salaries was announced, together with a cut in public spending (in 1976, 9,000 officials were dismissed, i.e. 20% of all public servants). Agriculture would continue to be "the backbone of the economy" and government control would be increased gradually. Since the second half of the 1970s the integral collectivization of agricultural production and the means of production through the project of *ujamaa* villages—some 9,000 throughout the country—gave way to a more gradual process.

Several rounds of negotiations with the International Monetary Fund took place in 1979 and 1980 for a loan of 200,000,000 dollars. Nyerere condemned several times what he described as flagrant interference by the IMF in Tanzania's internal affairs. Eventually, the Tanzanian government accepted some of the IMF conditions, and the loan agreement was signed in July 1980. In the same month, Finance Minister Amir Jamal declared in Arusha that "the request for financial aid from the IMF does not mean the end of our own efforts to develop our country".

In October 1980 Nyerere was re-elected for yet another term as President. Aboud Jumbe retained his office as Vice-President and head of the Zanzibar government, just as Prime Minister Edward Sokoine from the Massai ethnic community, who had replaced in February 1977 the former trade-union leader and Tanzania's First Vice-President, Rashidi Kawawa.

Milton Obote's victory in the Ugandan elections held in December 1980 should be a guarantee of more stable relations between Tanzania and Uganda.

Economy: Tanzania's GNP amounted to 3,880,000,000 dollars in 1978, with the annual growth of 2.1% between 1970 and 1977. Gross industrial product rose to 3,000,000,000 dollars in 1979 and grew at the annual rate of 4.5% between 1970 and 1977. The structure of Tanzania's production in 1977 was as follows: 45% agriculture, 16% industry and 39% services. Agricultural products include coffee, cotton, sisal, spices (Zanzibar) and other crops, and agricultural production employs 84% of the total labour force (only 6% work in industry). A decline in the production of such crops as coffee and sisal represents a loss of some 150,000,000 dollars a year in the recent period. An extended drought in 1973 forced Tanzania to import 400,000 tons of cereals in 1974 and 1976, although it seems that already in 1979 the country had succeeded in gaining self-sufficiency in cereal supply. According to some estimates, almost 70% of the country is practically unproductive because of infestation by the tsetse fly, insufficiency of the rivers and the saline quality of its smaller lakes.

The mining industry extracts diamonds, uranium, wolfram and other non-ferrous metals. Tanzania has important deposits of coal, iron ore, phosphate and natural gas.

In 1979 Tanzania exported 574,000,000 dollars worth of products, while its imports amounted to 784,000,000 dollars. In 1976, 5% of its exports consisted of minerals, 86%

were primary agricultural commodities and 9% manufactured goods. The structure of imports in the same year was: foodstuffs 10%, fuels 18%, other primary products 5%, machinery and transport vehicles 35%, other manufactured goods 32%. In 1977 64% of Tanzania's exports went to the advanced capitalist countries, 30% to the developing countries, and 6% to the socialist countries. In 1977 Tanzania's external public debt amounted to 1,005,000,000 dollars, while its foreign-exchange reserves stood at 282,000,000 dollars. As one of the world's poorest countries, Tanzania is also one of those countries that receive most and most diversified international aid—some 600,000,000 dollars at the 1980 level. The national currency is the shilling (7.96 per U.S. dollar).

Government: Tanzania has a presidential-type government. The President, who is elected by popular vote for a term of five years, is the supreme authority in the country. Legislative power is vested in a National Assembly of 264 members.

Administratively, the country is divided into 20 regions, each having its regional commissioner; 17 are in the mainland part of the country and three on the islands.

Executive power is exercised by the President as head of the state. He is assisted by a cabinet of two Vice-Presidents and 19 Ministers. The First Vice-President is the principal adviser of the President in matters relating to Zanzibar. The Second Vice-President, who also holds the office of Prime Minister, is the President's principal aide relating to matters of the mainland territory and, on the other hand, to government matters in the National Assembly.

Armed forces: Tanzania's army is a part of the People's Defence Force. With the consent of the cabinet, its members help in the realization of agricultural tasks. There are, in addition, a military reserve force made up of volunteers, as well as volunteer police units assigned to frontier villages.

According to unofficial estimates, Tanzania's air force has 1,000 men, the army 13,000, the navy 600, and paramilitary corps 364,000.

Organizations: Since 1977 Tanzania's only political party is the Revolutionary Party (Shama Sha Mapinduzi), which came into being by merger of the Tanganyikan African National Union (TANU) and the Afro-Shirazi Party (ASP) in Zanzibar.

Education: Education has been free in Tanzania since 1973. According to official data, more than 5,000,000 Tanzanians have learned to read and write in an adult literacy campaign carried out by a special institute within the framework of the National University of Dar-es-Salaam. Novel methods were used in this campaign, in that peasants were learning from texts relating to their work, while among workers they were tied to the learning of new trades. Special books were written for the peasants, concerned in particular with the cultivation of bananas, others were dedicated to fishermen, to rice-growers, livestock keepers, etc.

There are about 5,000 primary schools in the country, more than 100 secondary schools and approximately 30 teacher-training schools. The University of Dar-es-Salaam is also attended by students from Kenya, Uganda and other African countries. The illiteracy rate in 1975 was 34%.

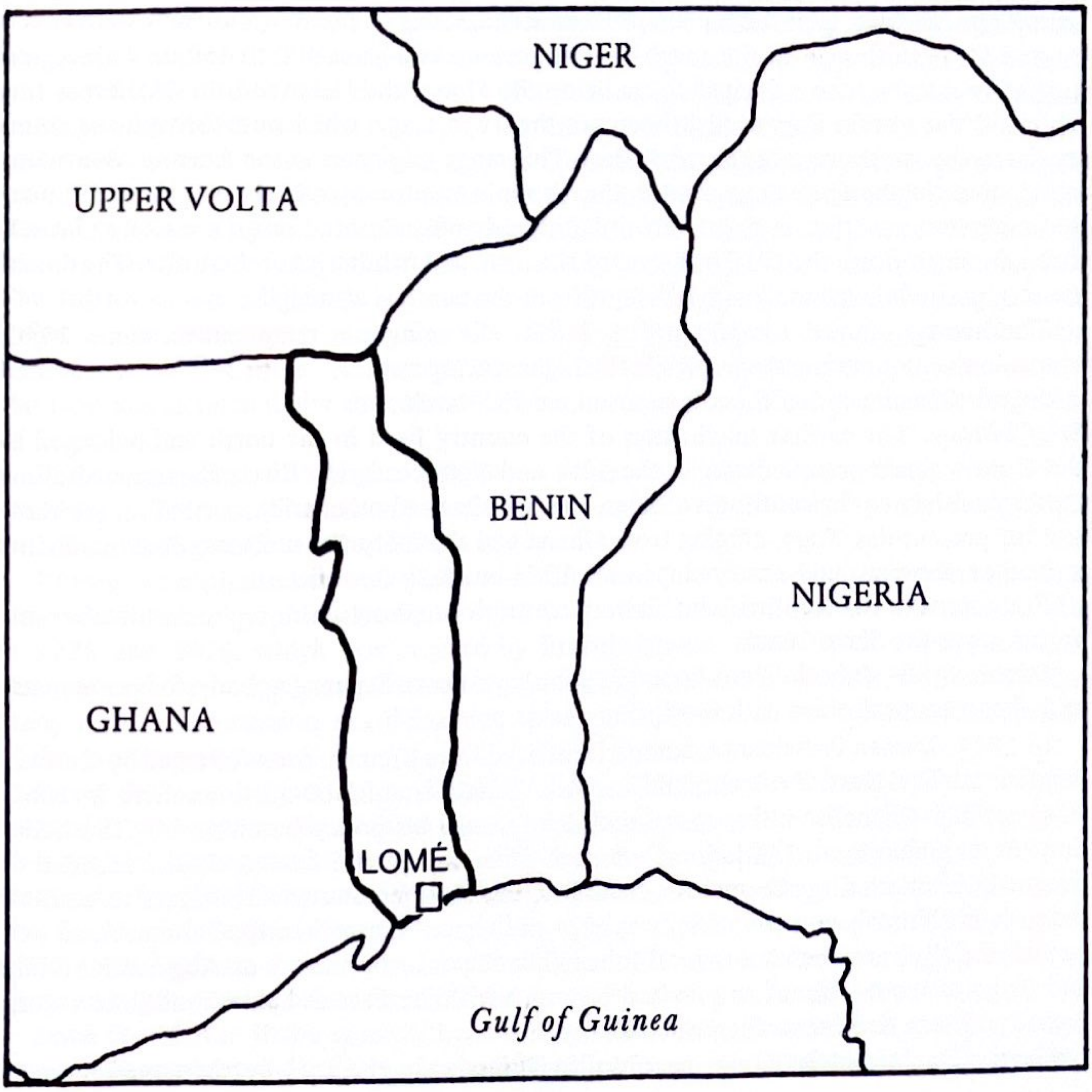
Public health: The government has succeeded in a few years to eliminate poliomyelitis, to extend the average life expectancy, and to cut the infant mortality rate from 250 per every 1,000 newly born to less than 50. Construction of state hospitals, rural dispensaries, large-scale vaccination of adults and children, these are all factors which have helped improve public health.

In 1977 60% of children younger than five years were vaccinated against the main children's diseases—smallpox, poliomyelitis, measles, tuberculosis, diphtheria and tetanus. It is estimated that 90% of children in this age group were thus inocculated in 1980.

Under the third five-year development plan, 100 medical centres are opened annually to enlarge the network of these facilities in the rural areas, where the majority of the population lives.

Religion: About 40% of the population practise the traditional animist cults, 30% are Moslems, and 30% profess differing Christian creeds.

TOGO


NIGER
UPPER VOLTA
BENIN
NIGERIA
GHANA
LOMÉ
Gulf of Guinea

Official name: The Republic of Togo.
Area: 56,600 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Togo borders on Upper Volta, in the west on Ghana, in the east on Benin, and in the south is a 55 km-long coast on the Gulf of Guinea.
Population: 2,418,000 inhabitants (1978). The principal ethnic groups are the Ewe, the Ouatchi, the Gourma, the Kabre, the Adele, the Akjosso and the Mina. Altogether, some 40 different tribes live on the territory of Togo. 14% of the population live in urban areas. The majority, living in the countryside and in the forests, subsist by farming, hunting mining, or working on large plantations. The approximately 4,000 Europeans who live in Togo are mostly concentrated in the towns. The annual rate of population growth is 2.6%.
Capital: Lome.
Principal towns: Sakode, Anecho, Palime, Atakpame, Bassari.
Languages: French is the official language, but Ewe, Haussa, Gour, Kabye, Moba and other tribal languages and dialects are widely spoken.
Public holidays: April 27, Independence Day.
Geography: Togo's territory is a relatively narrow stretch of land, which extends inland some 600 km between Ghana and Benin. The narrow coastal strip is low and sandy and is lined by dangerous reefs. Then comes a line of inland lagoons, the largest of them being Lake Togo. Further inland is a plain of laterite soil, rising to an average altitude of between 60 and 90 m, although in the north-west it goes up as high as 400 to 450 m. This region has many streams, the principal rivers being the Mono, the Haho and the Sio. From this tableland the terrain rises until it becomes the Togo range, which cuts through the country from the south-west to the north-east. This range originates in the Atacora Mountains in neighbouring Benin and merges with the Akwapin Mountains in Ghana. Mt. Agou (986 m) is the highest elevation in Togo. On the other side of the central range is a stony plateau, through which flows the Oli River, one of the principal tributaries of the Volta. The north-western part of the country, most distant from the coast, is also high.

The average annual temperature is 26°C. The minimum temperature, some 20°C, occurs in the mountainous areas, while the highest temperatures—up to 38°C—are recorded in the north at the end of the rainy season, i.e., in March.

Brief history: The earliest inhabitants of the country lived in the north and belonged to the Gour-Voltaic group. Between the 12th and 14th centuries, Ewe tribes moved along the Niger River to the south-west. Later, the Yorubas and other tribes settled on the territory of present-day Togo, coming from Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Portuguese merchants arrived on the coast and surveyed it in the 15th and 16th centuries.

For the next two centuries intensive slave trade went on in this region, which became notorious as the Slave Coast.

Prior to 1884 only the Petit Popo (Anecho) and Porto Seguro (Agbodrafo) posts maintained constant relations with Europeans.

In 1847 German Protestant missionaries arrived from Bremen, soon followed by German merchants. The Nord Deutsche Mission Gesellschaft established missions there in 1860.

The 1884 Chancellor Bismarck decided to change his policy based on his firm belief that the colonziation of Africa was a loss of men, energy and resources, and acceded to the pressure exerted by German missionaries, businessmen and naval officers to counter the growing French power and influence in the region. Consequently, German naval personnel and German merchants established themselves in the towns of Abganakin, Glidji and Togo, on one side of the coastal lagoon, while the French held Grand-Porto, Petit Popo and Porto Seguro on the other side.

Gustav Nachtigal, the German consul in Tunis, was appointed by the government in Berlin to concern himself with German interests on Africa's western coast. He raised the German flag in Baguida on July 4, 1884, after having overcome the resistance of King Lawsen "Tagodee" in Petit Popo and King Mensah in Porto Seguro. The next day he signed with King Mlapa III of Togodo the first treaty establishing a German protectorate on the Gulf of Benin, which was written in English and concluded in Baguida, and which gave the name of Togo to all the acquired territory. The capital was established in Baguida.

The conquest of Togo was the work of the Germans Adolf Krausse, von Francois, Ludwig Wolf, von Doering, Gruner and Count Zech, who exploited the efforts of the missionaries. In 1885 France ceded Petit Popo and Porto Seguro to the German possessions in Togo in exchange for Koba and Kobitai in Guinea, held by the Germans. Two years later Togo's frontiers were again adjusted when the French ceded to Germany the areas of Kri-Kri, Bafilo, Kabou, Mango and Gambaga in exchange for Gourma, Bourgou, Djougou and Semere. The frontiers of German Togo were finally and definitely fixed by treaties signed with France in 1897 and Great Britain in 1899.

The German colonization of the country was slow and was realized with the help of military expeditions into the interior. The Germans described Togo as a "model colony" in which they developed agricultural resources.

When World War I broke out, Togo was surrounded by British and French colonies, while the sea off the colony's coast was dominated by the British navy. Thus, the Germans, with only a small police force in Togo, could not put up much of a resistance to the French and the British forces. After three weeks of hostilities the Germans surrendered at Kamina on August 26, 1914—the first victory of the Entente in World War I.

Before the final peace treaty was signed, Lome and the western part of Togo were provisionally placed under British administration, while the French controlled the east. The Versailles Treaty (June 28, 1919) changed this division and France was given 56,000 sq.km, i.e., the greater part of Togo, including Lome and the railway French forces had occupied. The British sphere of control was increased to 33,800 sq.km. In 1922 this occupation of Togo by the two powers was given the form of a mandate by the League of Nations.

Togo had been divided twice—in 1914 and 1919—and only after many adjustments did the frontiers as fixed under the second division become those of the present-day Republic of Togo.

The country passed through a number of stages: administrative autonomy from 1921 to 1934, a "personal" union with Dahomey from 1934 to 1936 and partial integration with French West Africa from 1936 to 1945.

During the capitalist crisis of 1929 and in the subsequent period Togo lived in a climate of constant political upheaval, revolts against taxes and a major insurrection at Konkomba in 1935 and 1936, which was crushed by French troops. The "Cry of Togo", the first nationalist daily newspaper in the country, edited by Antoine d'Almeida, condemned the many forms of repression and demanded the expulsion of some Europeans and the recall of the French governor.

From the very beginning, the local inhabitants—both in the eastern and the western parts of Togo—opposed the division imposed on their country and called for reunification. This problem was raised in the League of Nations on October 8, 1920, by delegates representing the National Congress of West Africa. Other movements, too, joined in this demand. The Circle of Friends of France—founded in 1936 by a group of Europeans and Africans, whose vice-chairman, the commercial agent Sylvanus Olimpio, later became Togo's President —expressed the sentiments of the different interests existing in the country.

Until World War II the country lived through constant turbulence and social upheaval between Europeans, individuals of mixed blood, Africans and Togolese who had become

French citizens, an expression of the new social structure.

Later, Togolese nationalism was guided by the recommendations of the Brazzaville Conference, held in March 1944, which called for the election of members to the French National Assembly. General de Gaulle promised the adoption of some measures to alleviate the situation of the masses of Africans.

Through a plebiscite, the inhabitants of the British part of Togo opted in 1956 for unity with the Gold Coast (now Ghana), while the French part became in the same year an autonomous republic within the French Union. However, the United Nations rejected this method of ending the trustreeship system and two years later supervised elections in which the majority was won by the Committee for Togolese Unity (CUT), Sylvanus Olimpio becoming Prime Minister.

A year later Togo became independent and Olimpio was appointed President on April 27, 1960. The government was characterized by its attempts to do without French financial subsidy. At home it faced strong opposition led by Nicolas Grunitzky (Togo's Premier from 1956 to 1958 under French tutelage) and Antione Meatchi, as well as by former soldiers who had served in the French army in the Franco-Algerian war.

Both before and after independence, Togolese political life was marked by intense conflicts between the CUT of Sylvanus Olimpio and the Togolese Progressive Party (PTP) led by Grunitzky, combined with tribal frictions between the north and the south, which grew in strength after independence.

On January 13, 1963, a coup took place, headed by then Lieut.-Col. Etienne Eyadema, who appointed Grunitzky Provisional President. President Olimpio was killed when he tried to find asylum in the U.S. Embassy in Lome. Grunitzky's government issued a call for national unity of all political groups, but maintained the neo-colonialist ties established by the previous regime and pursued a policy opposed to the African liberation movements while assisting different secessionist groups in Ghana and other countries in the area.

Several attempts were made to overthrow the Grunitzky government, the most serious of them—in November 1966—headed by Dr. Noe Kutuklui. On January 13, 1967, Eyadema led a military putsch which raised him to the presidency, the office he has held to this day. He immediately dissolved the National Assembly and four months later abolished all political parties.

In 1969 President Eyadema formed the Togolese People's Unity Party, of which he is the leader and which he claims is a vast movement associating all Togolese. Membership in this organization is mandatory for all Togolese.

On May 22, 1971, the Togolese government called for an open dialogue with the South African regime, joining an abortive trend which at that time tried to tie some African states to South Africa's economic interests.

Under Eyadema's presidency Togo has seen several alleged coup attempts staged—as claimed by the opposition—by the President himself. The most prominent among them were those of January 1969, September 1971 and November 1976. The failure of two plots was reported at the end of 1977, which, according to official sources, envisaged the participation of foreign mercenaries, mostly British.

In 1971 Eyadema organized a referendum in which the voters were expected to express their desire for the continuation of his government, but he won only a minority at the polls. Nevertheless, he retained his power as—in his own words—"a soldier ready to sacrifice himself for his country under whatever circumstances".

On February 3, 1974, the government nationalized the entire phosphate production, the principal source of foreign exchange, for which it later—in November—decided to provide compensation in the form of a mixed company with foreign capital.

In 1974 the government faced a critical situation in a conflict with the Roman Catholic hierarchy, provoked by an official announcement that the government would follow the Zairean campaign of "national identity" by abolishing Christian names and replacing them with authentic African names. The President himself changed his Christian name of Etienne to Ngassimbe.

An educational reform was instituted at the beginning of 1976, under which education became free and compulsory for all Togolese two to 15 years old.

General elections were held at the end of December 1979, a new constitution was approved and Eyadema was re-elected as President. 67 members were elected to the National Assembly, which had been dissolved in January 1967. In January 1980 Presient Eyadema proclaimed the Third Republic.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the principal sectors of the national economy. Agriculture is pursued on 2,100,000 hectares out of the total area of 5,000,000 hectares by 75% of the economically active population (which possesses only 10% of the cultivable area), estimated to number 892,000 in 1975. According to 1978 FAO figures, Togo produced 117,000 tons of millet and sorghum, 8,000 tons of coffee, 16,000 tons of cocoa, 151,000 tons of maize, 23,000 tons of rice, 35,000 tons of peanuts, 2,000 tons of cotton seed, 2,000 tons of sesame, 14,000 tons of coconuts, 2,000 tons of copra, and 13,000 tons of bananas. In the same year Togo had, according to the FAO, 245,000 head of cattle, 800,000 sheep, 650,000 goats, and 270,000 pigs. The forests produced in 1977 1,090,000 cu. m of timber; in the same year the fish catch was 8,440 tons.

The mining industry gained importance after the discovery and subsequent exploitation of phosphate deposits. Togo became the world's fourth largest producer of phosphate with 3,000,000 tons in 1979. The processing industry turned out 18,000 tons of palm oil in 1978.

According to the World Bank, Togo's GNP in 1977 amounted to 650,000,000 dollars and was estimated to rise to 770,000,000 dollars in 1978. The national budget was balanced at 60,600,000,000 CFA francs. The country's external public debt amounted to 30,700,000,000 CFA francs in 1976. The 1978 balance of trade closed with a deficit of 32,852,000,000 CFA francs, with exports of 53,035,000,000 CFA francs exceeded by imports worth 85,887,000,000 CFA francs. More than half of the exports consist of phosphate. At the end of 1978 Togo's foreign-exchange reserves amounted to 70,400,000 dollars. The cost of living in 1977 was 177.2% higher than in 1970. The national currency is the CFA franc.

Government: Under the constitution adopted in 1979, executive power is held by the President, who is elected by popular vote for a term of seven years. The President may dissolve the National Assembly, which has 67 members elected for a term of five years. Togo is administratively divided into four principal regions—maritime, highland, central and plains—controlled by presidential inspectors, who are advised by elected councils.

There are 21 local governments, headed by directors who are appointed by the Chief Executive. There are also district councils, and tribal and family authority is recognized in judicial matters and local customs, although there is a Supreme Court. Eyadema maintains a personal rule and appoints his ministers and members of the Central Committee and Political Bureau of the sole political party, the RPT.

Armed forces: Togo has no air force. Its army has 3,900 men, 1,400 of whom belong to paramilitary corps. The gendarmerie has 16,000 men.

Organizations: There is only one political party, the Togolese People's Union (RPT), founded by Eyadema in 1969. Established later were the JRPT—the youth section of the party—the UNFT (the National Union of Togolese Women), and the only trade union organization, the National Confederation of Togolese Workers (CNTT). There are, in addition, many workers' associations, largely based on trades or the products their members supply to the domestic market.

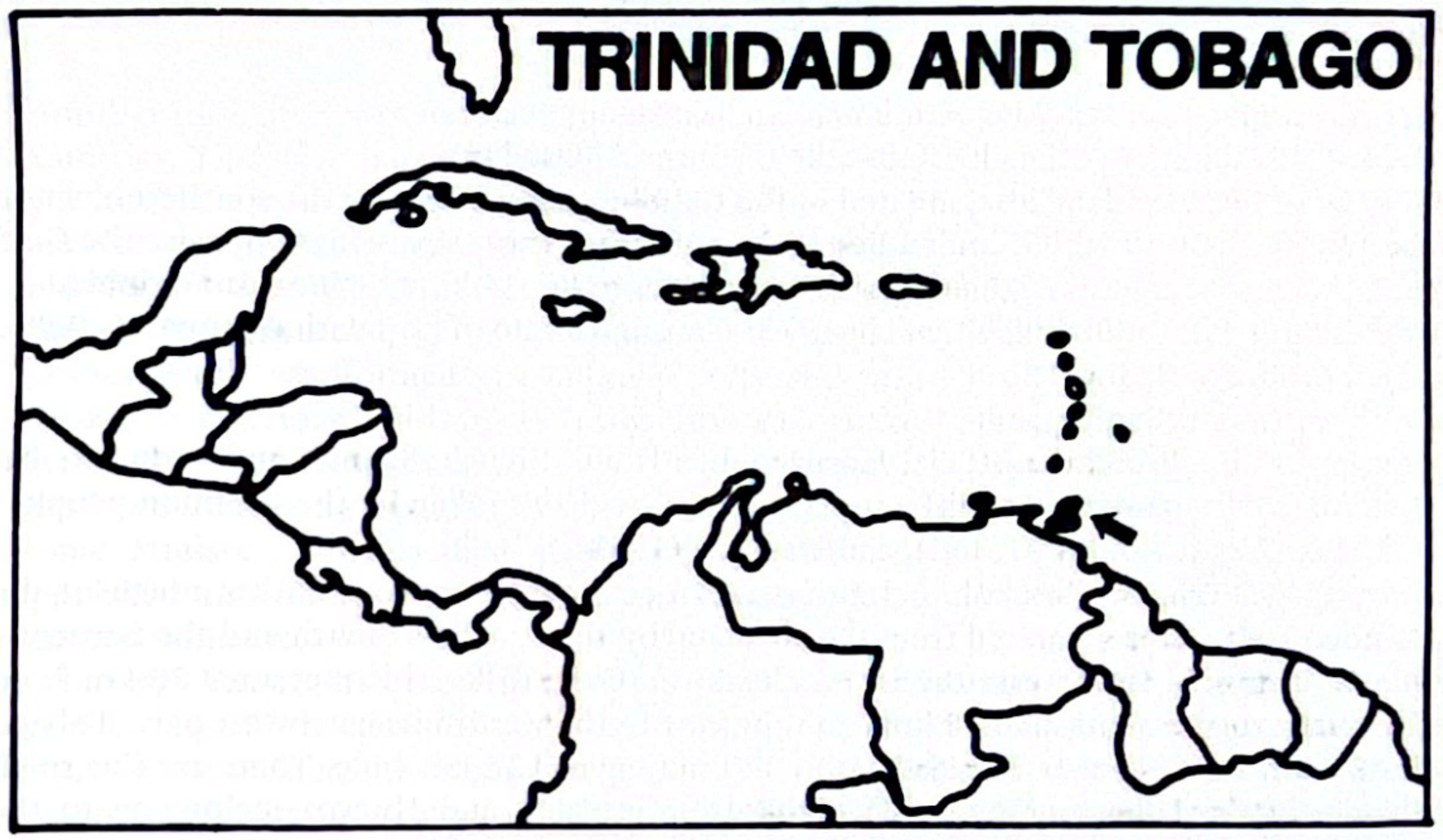
Education: In the academic year 1975-1976 there were 934 primary schools with 362,895 pupils, 91 secondary and vocational schools with some 66,000 students, and a university with 2,186 students. More than 50% of school-age children attend school.

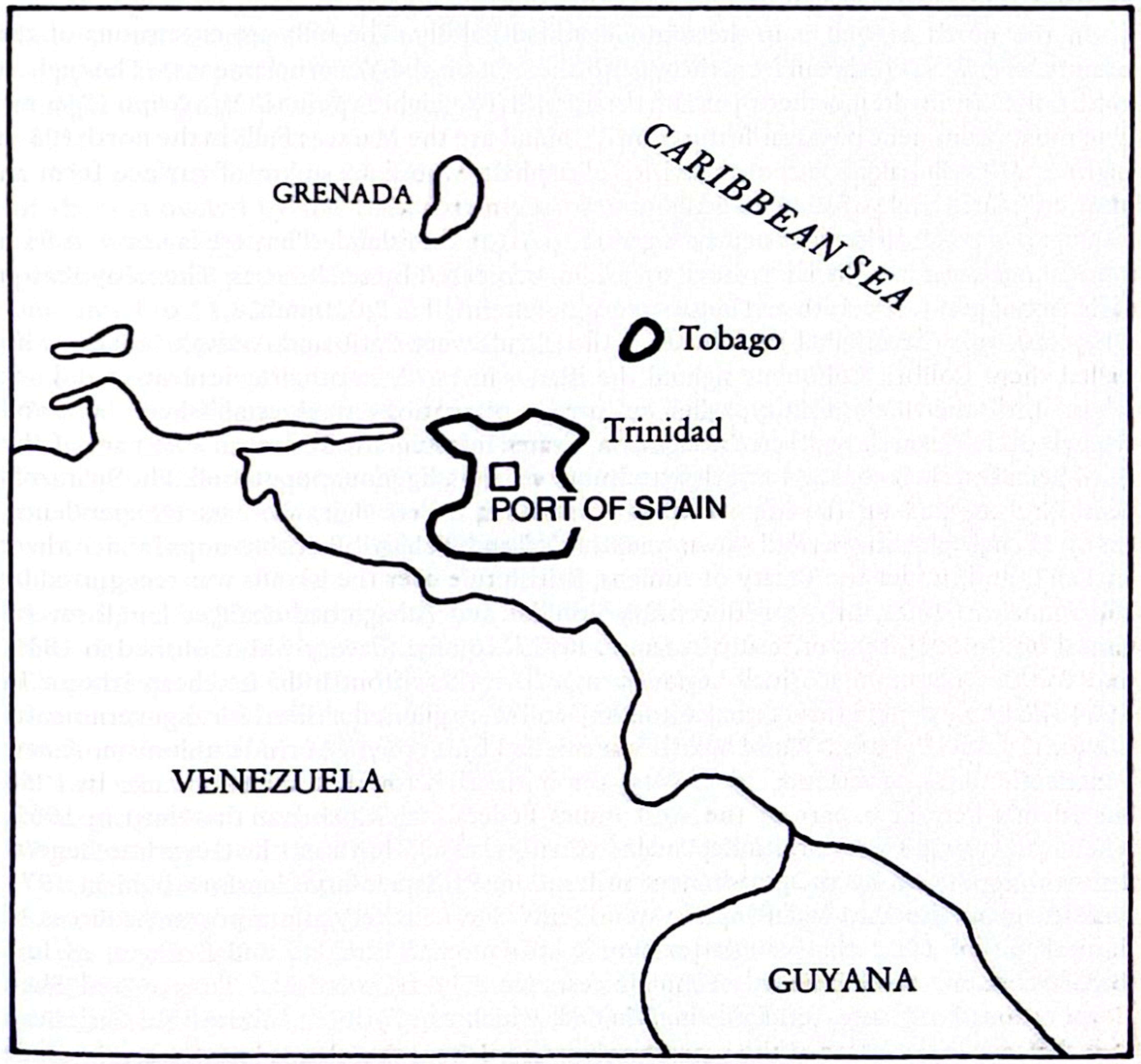
A reform of the educational system is under way in order to make it conform to the country's needs. It includes instruction in Ewe and Rabye as national languages which would eventually replace French as the official language, as announced by the Ministry of Education.

Public health: There are some 20 hospitals in the country. According to the latest available figures, there is one hospital bed for every 634 inhabitants. According to the same, 1976, figures, there is one doctor per every 20,500 inhabitants.

Religion: The majority of the population practises animist cults, but approximately 18% of the people are Roman Catholics, 9% are Moslems and 6.5% Protestants.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO





Official name: The Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.
Area: 5,128 sq.km (Trinidad 4,828 sq.km, Tobago 300 sq.km).
Borders: The two islands are situated in the Caribbean Sea. They are the southernmost of the West Indian islands. Trinidad lies 16 km off the Venezualan coast opposite the Gulf of Paria and the mouth of the Orinoco River. Tobago lies 34 km north-east of Trinidad.
Population: 1,175,000 inhabitants in 1978. The annual rate of population growth is 0.9%.
Capital: Port of Spain.
Principal towns: San Fernando, Arima, Scarborough.
Languages: English is the official language, but Hindi, French, Spanish and Urdu are also spoken. Patois, a mixture of different languages is widely spoken by the common people.
Public holidays: August 31, Independence Day (1962).
Geography: Trinidad lies off the north-eastern coast of Venezuela, 25 km north of the Orinoco Delta. It is separated from the mainland by the Dragon's Mouth and the Serpent's Mouth channels. In the east the island closes the Gulf of Paria. It measures 80 km from the north to the south and 48 km from the east to the west in its narrowest part. Tobago lies 32 km north-east of Trinidad and is 42 km long and 11 km wide. There are five small islands—Little Tobago, Monos, Chacachacare, Gasparee and Huevos—belonging to the republic.

In the north as well as in the south Trinidad is hilly. The hills are extensions of the mountain ranges which run from the west to the east on the Venezuelan coast. The highest elevations are in the northern part of the island. The highest point is Mt. Aripo (940 m). The most prominent physical features on Trinidad are the Maracas Falls in the north (95 m high) and Pitch Lake, an enormous lake of asphalt, whose 46 sq.km of surface form an almost perfect circle of some five kilometres circumference.

Sugar cane and rice fields cover a greater part of the island. The rest is covered with woods and savanna. The climate is tropical but tempered by sea breezes. The rainy season lasts from June to December. The average annual rainfall is 2,030 mm.

Brief history: The original inhabitants of the islands were Carib and Arawak Indians, who called them Colibri. Columbus sighted the islands in 1498, but their colonization did not begin until the 17th century, when sugar-cane plantations were established there and masses of African slaves were brought in. Pirates infested the waters in this part of the Caribbean and their constant attacks exterminated the indigenous population. The Spaniards therefore stepped up the import of African slaves. When Haiti won its independence, many French planters settled down on Trinidad and Tobago. British troops landed there in 1797, and, under the Treaty of Amiens, British rule over the islands was recognized by the French in 1802. In the 18th century Trinidad and Tobago had changed hands several times, but in 1814 they officially became a British colony. Slavery was abolished in 1834, and for this reason the British began to import workers from India as cheap labour. In 1924 the islands opted for internal autonomy and were granted elected local governmental bodies. The period after World War II was marked by a growth of trade unionism. A new constitution was proclaimed in 1950 as the initial step towards independence. In 1958 the islands became a part of the West Indies Federation, which was dissolved in 1962, when, on August 31 national independence finally arrived. However, the Governor-General was still appointed by the government in London. Parliamentary elections held in 1971 were won by the National People's Movement. The discovery of important sources of natural gas in 1973 changed the economic structure of Trinidad and Tobago, as fuel exports became their primary economic resource. The transnational Texaco and Shell Corporations built large refineries in Trinidad, which supply fuel to the whole Caribbean area. Paradoxically, most of the petroleum extracted from the islands is exported in crude form because the refineries have the capacity of processing only crude oil from the Arab countries. The petrodollars earned by the country have radically changed Trinidad's society, which suffers from a massive impact of U.S. influence. A republic was proclaimed in 1976 and the last formal ties with the British Crown were cut. Workers' disturbances broke out in 1975. Dr. Eric Williams, who had held the office of Prime Minister without interruption since 1950, called out the troops to distribute petrol and thus broke the strike. A United Labour Front was formed as a political party and won ten of the 36 contested seats in legislative elections held in 1976, while the rightist opposition, represented by the Democratic Action Congress, won only two seats. However, it won on Tobago and threatened that it would create a separatist movement. The National People's Movement won 24 seats. Prime Minister Williams died at the end of March 1981. The President, Ellis Clarke, appointed the Minister of Agriculture, Industry and Commerce, George Chambers, to succeed Williams.

Economy: Extraction and refining of petroleum are the country's main source of income. Of the 425,972 hectares of cultivable land, most of it privately owned, the state keeps 238,140 hectares, mostly woods, in order to cover the domestic demand for timber and to export valuable types of wood. The economically active population numbers approximately 340,000 persons (33% of the total population) and 56,000 of them work in agriculture. Unemployment runs from 15 to 20% of the labour force.

Apart from petroleum and sugar, Trinidad and Tobago produce rice, almonds, cocoa, oranges and grapefruit. The industry there mostly manufactures and processes local products.

The country has two petroleum refineries with the daily capacity of 66,000 tons. One of them is owned by the U.S. Texaco Corporation, the other by Royal Dutch Shell (this refinery was acquired by the state in 1974). The two refineries process 25% of the locally produced crude petroleum and 75% of imported crude oil. In 1977 petroleum production amounted to 11,832 tons, while the extraction of natural gas was 1,699,716 cu.m in 1976. The country possesses enormous sources of asphalt, which make it the world's second largest exporter of this commodity.

Government: The parliament is bicameral, with a Senate of 31 members and a Chamber of Representatives of 36 members. The two chambers, meeting in joint session, elect the President, while the political party which wins the majority of parliamentary seats appoints the Prime Minister. The members of parliament are elected directly by the people. Administratively, the country is divided into eight counties, three municipalities, and one district (Tobago).

Armed forces: There is no army but a National Guard. The police force has some 3,000 men. In the 1940s Great Britain ceded to the United States the air and naval base of Chaguaramas. In 1960 the British West Indies called for the abrogation of that treaty and the return of the military facilities. The United States promised to return 80% of the territory involved by 1977, but thus far has not fulfilled the promise. The base is situated in the north-western part of Trinidad on a bay which has great depth and commands a strategic position in the Caribbean.

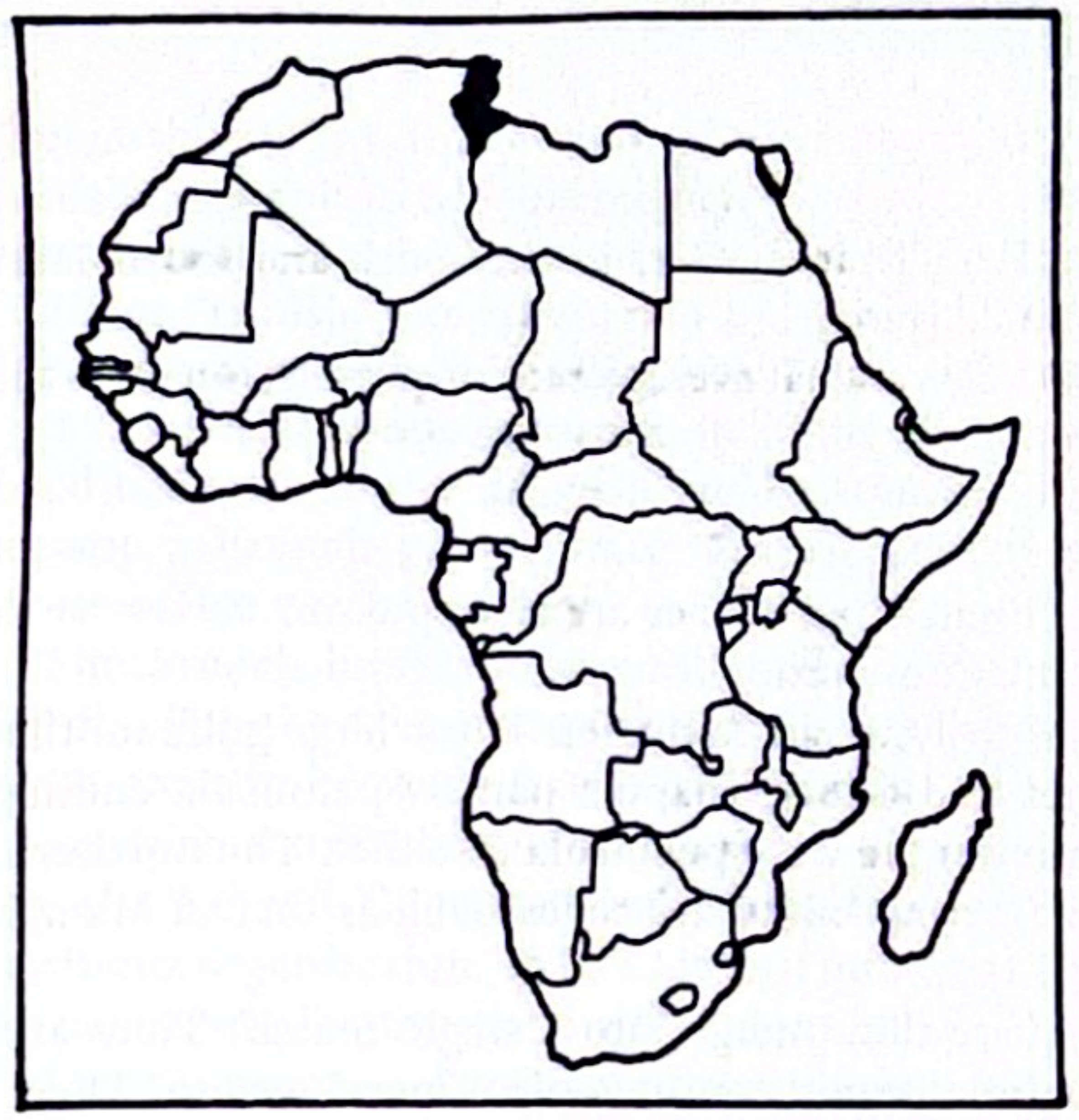
Organizations: The late Eric Williams founded the National Peoples' Movement in 1956. This party has dominated the political scene for more than 20 years and won successively four elections, retaining Williams as Prime Minister. The United Labour Front, which ran in the elections for the first time in 1976, won ten parliamentary seats. The Democratic Action Congress, which won only two seats in the 1976 elections, was opposed to Williams and claims a certain degree of autonomy for Tobago, which is its stronghold.

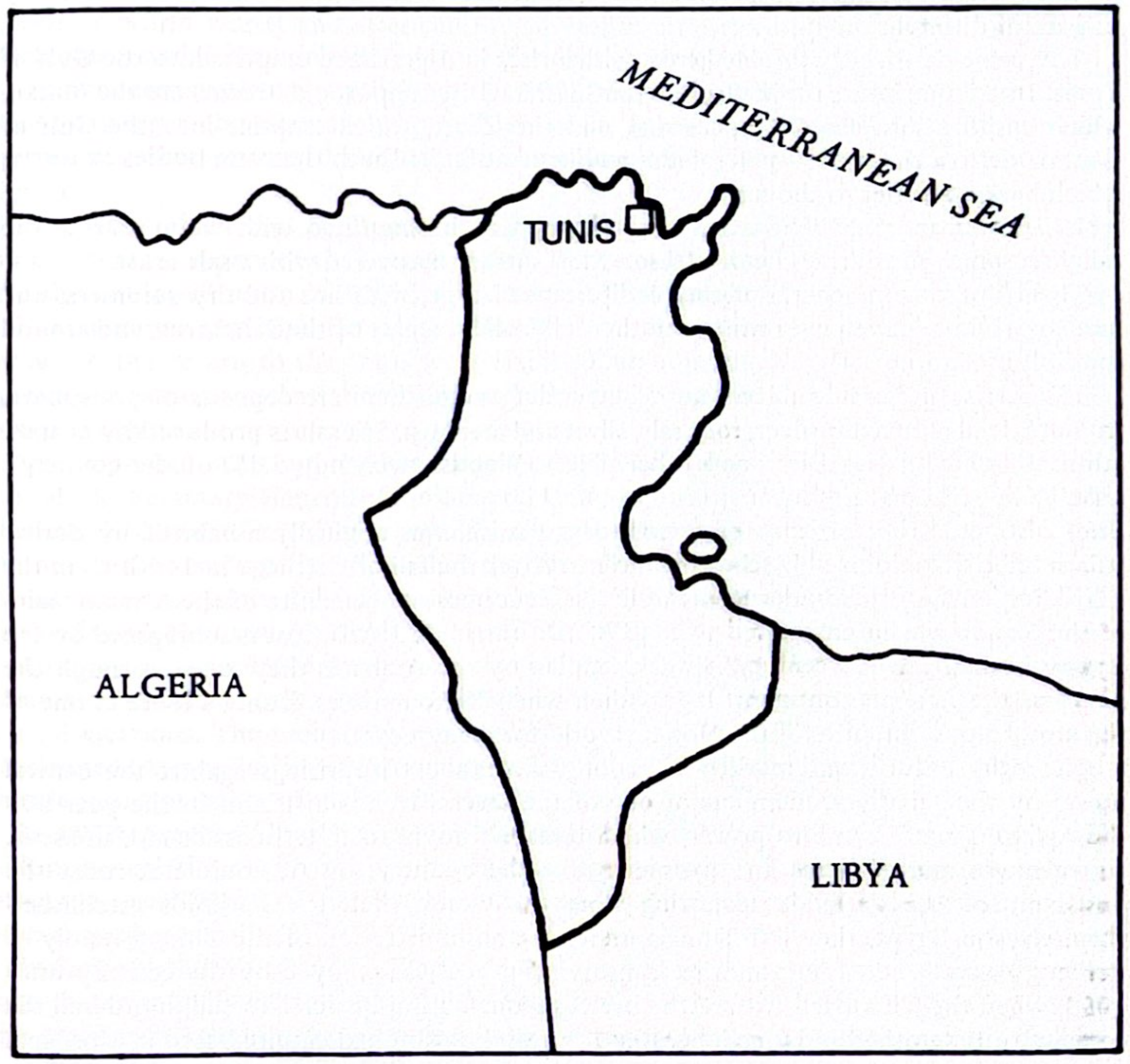
Education: Both primary and secondary education is compulsory and free. There are some 750 schools at both levels with about 300,000 pupils. Some 3,000 students are enrolled in higher educational institutions. There are two Polytechnical Institutes—in Port of Spain and San Fernando—and four teachers' colleges, as well as the University of West Indies, with an enrolment of more than 2,000 students. Just over 21% of the national budget is spent on education.

Public health: According to 1978 figures, Trinidad and Tobago have 15 hospitals, with a total capacity of 4,455 beds, 618 doctors and 6,873 nurses. The average life expectancy is 69 years. The infant mortality rate is 27.7 per 1,000 live-born babies. 10.6% of the national budget is spent on public health.

Religion: Christians (Roman Catholics and Anglicans) form 71% of the population, 23% are Hindus, and the remaining 6% are Moslems.

TUNISIA





Official name: The Republic of Tunisia.
Area: 164,150 sq.km.
Borders: In the north and the east is the Mediterranean Sea, in the south and south-east Tunisia borders on Libya, and in the west on Algeria.
Population: 6,075,000 inhabitants (1978). The annual average rate of population growth in the period 1970-1974 was 2%.
Capital: Tunis.
Principal towns: Sfax, Sousse, Bizerta.
Languages: Arabic is the official language. French and Berber are also spoken.
Public holidays: June 1, Proclamation of the Constitution.
Geography: Tunisia is the northernmost of the African countries. Three large gulfs on the eastern coast—those of Tunis, Hammamet and Gabes—shape a narrow peninsula ending with Cape Bon, while further to the south lies the wide peninsula of Sahel. The northern coast is rather even, although there are numerous inlets and coves, such as that of Manzil Bourguiba.

The Atlas ranges also enter Tunisia where they merge into a single massif. They are much lower than in Algeria and Morocco, but contain considerable mineral wealth. These mountains are to be found in the north-western and south-central parts of the country and are of different origin.

The principal river is the Medjerda, which rises in Algeria and empties into the Gulf of Tunis. Its tributaries are the Melleg and the Silfana. Other important streams are the Milian, which empties into the Gulf of Tunis, and the Zeret, which empties into the Gulf of Hammamet. In the central part of the country and in its south there are bodies of water, which have no outlet to the sea.

In Djefara and Sahel there are many *shatts,* i.e., basins filled with water during the rainy season, while during the dry season their surface is covered with a salt crust.

The climate is in general of the Mediterranean type, with hot and dry summers, and moderate and relatively wet winters in the Tell Valley, a part of the Sahel area, and around the Gulf of Tunis.

Tunisia is an agricultural country, but underground there are deposits of phosphate, iron ore, lead, zinc with silver, rock salt, silver and mercury. Sea salt is produced by evaporation at Soliman, Ras Dima and other places. Woods cover only 5.1% of the country's area.

Brief history: The territory of present-day Tunisia was originally inhabited by Berber tribes and then colonized by the Phoenicians. After the fall of Carthage in 146 B.C. in the Third Punic War, it fell under Roman rule. Later it became the centre of the African realm of the Vandals, who conquered it in 439 A.D. but in 553 A.D. it was subjugated by the Byzantines. In the 7th century it was occupied by the Arabs as they swept through the north of the African continent. It was then when Kairouan was founded there as one of the most important cities of the Moslem world for many years.

The 8th century was marked by a long succession of uprisings against the central power by the Jabariyas, members of one of the several trends in Islam. In the year 800 the Aglabi dynasty came to power, which remained loyal to the Abbassids in Damascus. Its rule was one of peace and prosperity for the country, but it could not resist the onslaught of the Fatimids advancing from the west. When the Fatimids established themselves in Egypt, they left Tunisia under the administration of the Ziris, a family of Berber princes. Thereupon, another century of peace was enjoyed by the country until 1050, when the Ziris tried to free themselves from Fatimid rule. The caliph ordered the country to be crushed and then it became a part of the Almohad empire based in Morocco.

The authority of the Caliph of Baghdad was restored when the Hafsi family, ruling Tunisia, recognized his sovereignty. The Hafsis established a strong and centralized government, but the death of Uthman (1435-1488) precipitated the end of their realm.

Later, Tunisia was conquered by Khairuddin (known as the Red Beard) for the Turks, following a period of vassalage to Spain and several Spanish invasions of its territory.

Throughout those centuries, until the French conquest of Algeria in 1830, piracy provided the main source of livelihood to Tunisia. In 1881, under the Treaty of Bardo, Tunisia became a French protectorate. Since then it was ruled by a bey—commander-in-chief—whose office was hereditary.

The French intervention was based on tribal disturbances along Tunisia's frontier with Algeria, but the true reason was undoubtedly the political and economic rivalry existing in the country between Italy, Great Britain and France.

Tunisian nationalism emerged at the beginning of the 20th century. The Destour Party —or the Liberal Constitutional Party—was formed in 1920 from groups of the Young Tunisians organization. In 1933 it split into two factions—a modernistic one, which adopted the name Neo-Destour, and a traditionalist.

The Communist Party was founded in 1925, the year when the colonial authorities launched a campaign of represssion of the forces opposed to the metropolitan power.

During World War II and after the French-Italian armistice of 1940, Tunisia, although it remained under the administration of the French government in Vichy, was controlled by Italian commissioners until May 15, 1943. After the Libyan campaign, the Allied troops dislodged the Germans who had landed in Tunisia in November 1942. Its administration was then entrusted to General Juin, who was subordinated to the Committee for Algeria.

Bey Sidi Mohamed al Mounsaf was replaced in 1943 by Sidi Mohamed Amin. In 1946 Tunisia became a part of the French Union. Between 1946 and 1952, the French tried to save their colonial realm in Tunisia by different provisional measures, economic reforms and even minor participation of the Neo-Destour Party in the government. They also permitted the return to the country of Habib Bourguiba, the Neo-Destour leader, whom they had sent to a concentration camp and who had later succeeded in escaping and finding refuge in Egypt.

New repression was launched at the end of 1952 of progressive forces, in which Ferhad Hashid, the Secretary-General of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT) was killed. This act further inflamed the popular struggle. The crisis that thus developed in the colony reached such proportions that the French government opened negotiations with the Tunisians and granted them autonomy in 1955. The autonomy agreement was approved by the French National Assembly and ratified in August of that year.

Tunisia's independence was proclaimed on March 20, 1956. Habib Bourguiba returned home from another exile and was placed at the head of the government after the first general elections. The monarchy was abolished on July 25, 1957, when the republic was proclaimed. A constitution was promulgated on June 1, 1959, and Bourguiba was re-elected President in November of the same year.

In 1957, provoked by the presence of French troops on its territory, Tunisia broke off diplomatic relations with the former metropolitan country. France wanted to continue using the naval base at Bizerta, which angered the Tunisian people and led to a violent clash at the base on July 19, 1961.

In September 1961, General Charles de Gaulle and President Bourguiba opened negotiations that eventually led to the complete French evacuation of Bizerta in December 1963. The diplomatic relations between the two countries had already been re-established when de Gaulle became President in 1959.

In 1964 the French government suspended its economic aid to Tunisia after that country had decided to nationalize all foreign-owned land, which was the best in the country and which was mostly in the possession of French colonists. It was in that period when United States economic penetration of Tunisia began. Tunisia's ties with the United States were originally established during World War II, when Bourguiba had entered into contact with the American authorities and visited the United States.

In March 1969 Tunisia also signed in Brussels an agreement on partial association with the European Economic Community.

On the other hand, while the Tunisian government and the Destourian Socialist Party—the name assumed by the Neo-Destour Party in 1965—which governs the country, called themselves socialist, the means of production remained in private hands, and private enterprise has constantly expanded and grown stronger.

The government has been implementing four-year development plans, which provide for investments in industry, agriculture, transport, the tourist and other services and counts on foreign economic assistance.

In 1973 President Bourguiba returned to increasingly active political life after having recovered from a protracted illness. In that year, too, work went on to amend the constitution, and Bourguiba, who had been re-elected already four times, proposed to parliament to appoint him President-for-Life, which, in his opinion, would "be an honour for the country and meet the wishes of the majority of the population".

Some major changes were carried out in the government, which strengthened the presidency and removed from power elements influenced, if not supportive of Ahmed Ben Salah, who had fled the country after having escaped from prison in 1973. Ben Salah, a former cabinet minister, is considered to be a nationalist opposed to Bourguiba's policy. He is currently living abroad, from where he is fighting against the government of his country. In a letter, Ben Salah accused Bourguiba of being "the oldest standard-bearer of colonialism and reaction".

The government responded to these allegations by a wave of arrests of trade-union and student leaders who had protested against the President's moves to maintain himself perpetually in office.

In 1974 the Tunisian President convened a congress of his party, known as the "clarification congress", which ended with the election of the National Assembly and consolidation of the policy which—after the amendment of the constitution—led to his appointment as President-for-Life on March 19, 1975.

After many visits to Arab and African countries, Bourguiba announced on January 12, 1974, the merger of Tunisia and Libya into a single Islamic Arab Republic, where their two leaders would alternate as President and Vice-President.

The initial idea was to include in this federation other neighbouring countries, but in March of the same year, following a meeting with Gaddafi in Geneva, Bourguiba announced that he would not consummate the immediate federation with Libya. There were rumours at the time that the United States had put pressure on the Tunisian leader not to go through with the federation project. According to some observers, Tunisia sought through the merger access to cheap Libyan petroleum, which would help it solve the problems of inflation and of the international capitalist crisis.

Parallel with the growing American penetration, the Tunisian government also improved and strengthened its ties with France, which were still further consolidated by the visit in Tunisia of President Valery Giscard d'Estaing at the end of 1974, and which a joint communique described as "exemplary relations".

In 1975 workers' organizations and other nationalist groups criticized the government for promoting the growth of the bourgeois class, which was enriching itself from the facilities provided by the state for the purchase of land that had been leased by landless peasants.

Many strikes took place in Tunisia in the course of 1976 to protest against the impact of the economic crisis which had seized the country, and against the government's agrarian policy;

Thus 16,000 workers went on strike in October 1976 in protest against the application of a law enacted in 1970, which placed 188,000 hectares of land under private ownership. Some 7,000 railway workers struck on December 19 in support of another strike called by workers and employees of the Sfaz-Gafsa Phosphate Compnay. At the same time, in Bizerta, a major industrial centre, a strike initiated by workers of the STIR refinery spread to other industries.

The striking and protesting workers were attacked by troops and the police, which, in turn, provoked on January 10, 1977, the dismissal of several cabinet members and the resignation of the Secretary-General of the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT), Habib Achour, from the ruling Destourian Socialist Party, of whose Political Bureau he was a member. A parliamentary crisis grew more intense on December 13, when several cabinet ministers were criticized during a debate on the national budget in the National Assembly.

Since then, conflicts, which linked the defence of the workers' material demands with the defence of national interests, have multiplied.

This growing struggle led to the radicalization of the UGTT, in spite of attempts by government leaders to keep it isolated. This process was paralleled by a growing membership of the trade-union organization, which in 1978 passed the figure of 600,000.

The strike movement swept the country at a time when more than 300,000 workers were forced by the economic crisis to emigrate, 170,000 of them to France.

In the midst of this tension, the UGTT called a general strike for January 26, 1978, which became the country's major labour conflict since independence. According to an official report, 50 people were killed (according to other sources 130), 325 wounded, and more than 400 arrested during the strike, which was held in support of demands for better living conditions and against a wage-freeze ordered by the government.

Habib Achour, the UGTT Secretary-General and other members of the executive committee of the workers' organization were arrested, which for all practical purposes left the leadership of the UGTT paralyzed. Several months later, Achour and 29 trade-union leaders were placed on trial. On October 10 Habib Achour was sentenced to ten years of forced labour and the others to various terms of imprisonment.

Army troops patrolled the streets of Tunis, the UGTT headquarters were occupied by paratroops, and army helicopters flew over the city. The government imposed a curfew and proclaimed a state of emergency for a term of one month. At a press conference held on February 29, the former Minister of the Interior and a leader of the "Social Democrats" in the opposition group, Ahmed Mestiri, denounced the repression and indicated that the incidents had been provoked. He demanded that a special commission should be set up to investigate the incidents. For its part, the government tried to justify the massacre by claiming that a plot to overthrow it had been in the making.

The crisis caused by the general strike intensified the contradictions within the government in which several trends have vied for succession in view of the state of health and advanced age (almost 80 years) of the head of state. One of the groups aspiring for succession includes the Minister-Director of the Destourian Socialist Party, Mohamed Sayad, and the President's son, Habib Bourguiba, and has the support of the Tunisian Union of

Industry, Commerce and Trades.

Another group includes individuals who have been out of the government in recent years and who call for a "liberalization" of the regime and for dissolution of the only political party. Among those individuals is the former Interior Minister Ahmed Mestiri and the ex-Foreign Minister Mohammed Masmoudi, who was dismissed in 1974, following the break-up of the proposed merger of Tunisia and Libya.

The most radical trend involves the UGTT, the General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET), Ben Salah's Popular Unity Movement, and the Tunisian Communist Party.

The Communist Party outlined its position in a letter addressed to Habib Achour, the former Secretary-General of the UGTT, in which it expressed its solidarity with the trade-union organization and underlined that "the present violence is inherent in the suppression of liberties and in the repressive policy". In order to regroup the democratic forces, the Communist Party proposed the drafting of a platform which would provide for a "progressive and democratic alternative".

On the second anniversary of the bloody events of January 26, 1978, a strongly armed commando force attacked at the end of January 1980 the mining town of Gafsa, some 350 km south-west of Tunis. This attack, subsequently claimed by the Revolutionary Movement for the Liberation of Tunisia, was crushed by the government with the help of French military planes and helicopters. At the same time, French naval units appeared off Tunisia's coast. This French military intervention in Tunisia's internal affairs was condemned by world public opinion.

In February 1980, ships of the U.S. Sixth Fleet dropped anchor in Tunis, thereby suggesting the readiness of the United States to meddle in the internal affairs of the countries of North Africa.

In April 1980, 13 individuals involved in the Gafsa incident were executed.

On April 13 of the same year, Prime Minister Hedi Nouira, whom President Bourguiba himself had designated as his successor, was replaced by Mohammed Mzali for reasons of bad health.

Economy: Tunisia's economy is based on agriculture and mining. In 1978 agriculture provided employment for more than 526,000 people. The economically active population is estimated to exceed somewhat 1,500,000 persons, of whom more than 15% are unemployed. According to FAO figures for 1979, Tunisia's principal agricultural crops included 270,000 tons of barley, 680,000 tons of wheat, 300,000 tons of tomatoes, 400,000 tons of olives and 183,000 tons of citrus fruit. In the livestock sector it had in 1978, 810,000 head of cattle, 3,526,000 sheep, 205,000 camels and 950,000 goats.

Tunisia is rich in mineral resources and in 1978 produced 4,944,000 tons of petroleum, 339,000 tons of iron ore, 12,800 tons of lead, 13,400 tons of zinc, 3,712,000 tons of phosphate rock and 285,900,000 cu.m of natural gas.

Industry produced in 1978, 508,100 tons of phosphate, 226,700 tons of phosphoric acid, 881,500 tons of cement, 136,000 tons of olive oil, 42,400,000 litres of wine and 1,989,000,000 kWh of electric power. The fishing industry produced 54,900 tons of fish.

According to available data, Tunisia's GNP in 1977 amounted to 4,940,000,000 dollars. The 1978 balance of trade closed with a deficit, when imports amounted to 899,000,000 dinars and exports to 468,000,000 dinars. Agriculture accounted for 20% of exports (olive oil constituted 52% of the agricultural exports). Other major export items are crude petroleum (42% of the total exports) and phosphate (18%). Tunisia's foreign-exchange reserves in January 1978 amounted to 315,000,000 dollars. Its external pubic debt in 1976 stood at 1,403,000,000 dollars.

The national currency is the dinar, which is not freely convertible. In 1978 its rate of exchange was 2.3 U.S. dollars per dinar.

Government: Tunisia is a republic with a presidential system of government. It has a National Assembly of 121 members elected for a term of five years, a head of state, a Council of State and an Economic and Social Council.

Under the constitution proclaimed on June 1, 1959, legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, which must meet twice a year or when convened by the President or a majority of its members. The cabinet is headed by the Prime Minister.

The head of state must be at least 40 years old and may not be re-elected more than three times in succession. He is the supreme authority in military and civilian matters.

Under constitutional amendments initiated in 1974 and enacted in 1975, Habib Bourguiba became President-for-Life and the Prime Minister takes over temporarily the duties of the President in the case of the latter's death or incapacitation.

The Council of State combines judicial and administrative powers.

The duties of the Economic and Social Council primarily involve the drafting and submission of development plans to the National Assembly.

Armed forces: Tunisia's armed forces were created in 1956 and according to estimates have 31,200 men of whom 18,000 serve in the army, 2,500 in the navy, 1,700 in the air force, and 9,500 in paramilitary corps. In 1979 more than 15% of the national budget, i.e. the equivalent of 145,000,000 dollars, were spent on the armed forces.

Tunisian cadets are trained in France and the United States.

Organizations: The nationwide social organizations in Tunisia include the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT), the Tunisian Union for Industry, Commerce and Trades (UTICA), the Union of Tunisian Women (UMT) and the General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET).

Only a single political party is recognised—the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD)—although there is no constitutional provision to this effect. Its chairman is the head of state and its Secretary-General is the Prime Minister.

The PSD permeates the entire state apparatus. Its structure is pyramidal, as stipulated by the PSD congress in September 1974. The smallest organizational unit is a cell, which includes eight to ten members, and the hierarchy is topped by the Chairman and the Secretary-General. Individuals holding key positions are designated by the PSD Political Bureau.

The PSD has a number of control bodies for financial, organizational and disciplinary matters at local, regional and national levels. Although the party has a number of activists, its actual membership is estimated at only 20,000.

Differences within the party have resulted in the expulsion of some of its leaders both from the party and from the country's political life.

A Progressive National Liberation Front was formed on August 23, 1974, which is opposed to the Bourguiba government and which published a document whose authors are unknown. This document states that the Front strives for the unification of all progressive and nationalist forces both inside the country and abroad.

The Popular Unity Movement is an opposition organization led by Ben Salah, who is currently living in exile.

The Communist Party of Tunisia was founded in 1925 as a section of the French Communist Party. It was outlawed in 1963. It is calling for working-class struggle and unity and for Tunisia's non-involvement in any military blocs.

Education and sports: Tunisia's present population of school age, i.e., below the age of 20 constitutes 54% of the country's total population. The language of instruction is Arabic, although in many schools such subjects as mathematics, chemistry and others are taught in French, due to the large number of teachers from abroad who do not speak Arabic.

In the 1977-1978 school term, primary schools were attended by 981,255 pupils, 215,044 students attended secondary schools, and 20,909 students were enrolled in university-level schools. More than 24% of the population are illiterate.

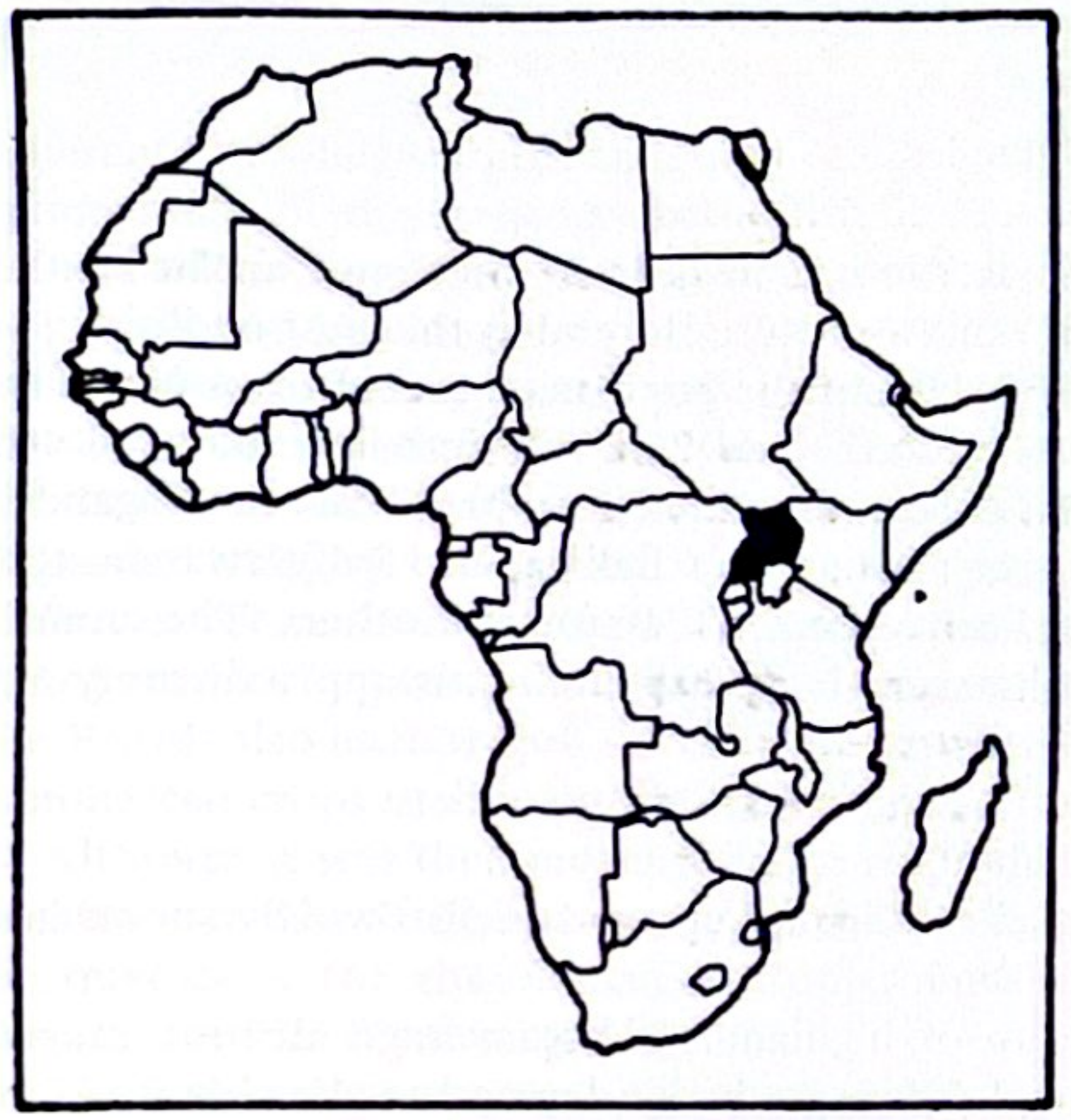
Students at the University of Tunis have traditionally voiced their opposition to arbitrary measures taken by the authorities in many demonstrations, which provoked closures of the university. This institution is described in the country as "the thermometer of the nation".

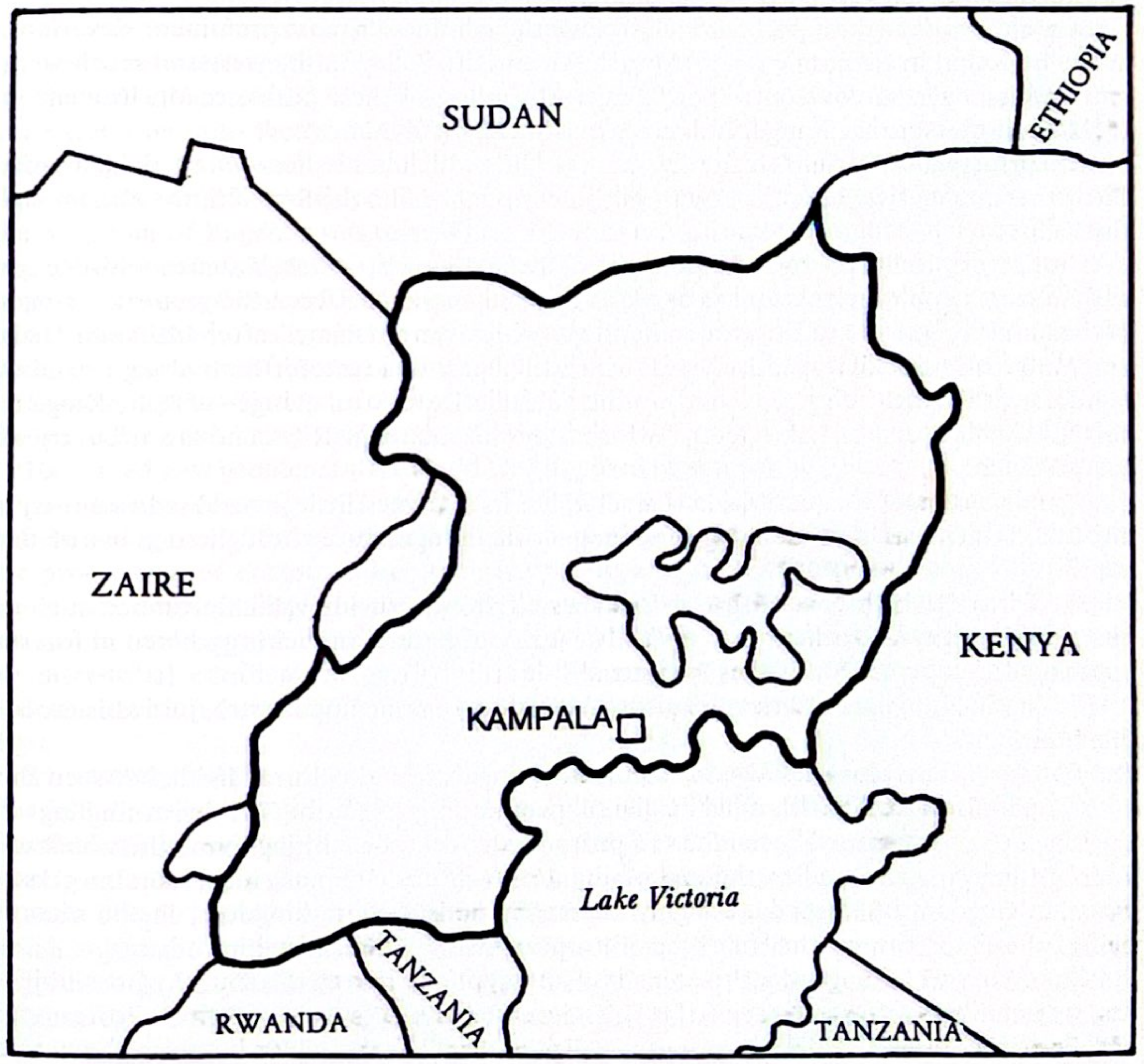
Graduates of universities and of the few vocational schools in existence find very few job opportunites. The unemployment rate in the country is high.

Public health: In 1978 Tunisia had 96 hospitals with a total capacity of 13,358 beds (i.e., one hospital bed for every 440 inhabitants) and the total of 1,511 doctors (i.e., one doctor for every 4,700 inhabitants).

Religion: Islam is the official religion and is professed by the majority of the population. There are also some 35,000 Roman Catholics, 23,000 Jews and smaller Orthodox and Protestant communities.

UGANDA





Official name: The Federal Republic of Uganda.
Area: 235,037 sq.km.
Borders: In the north Uganda borders on the Sudan, in the east on Kenya, in the south-east on Lake Victoria, in the south on Tanzania and Rwanda, and in the west on Zaire.
Population: 13,200,000 inhabitants in 1980. 99% of the population are Africans of Bantu origin (two-thirds of the total), Nilotic (one-sixth) and Para-Nilotic tribes. The rest are Europeans and Asians. The most numerous tribe among the Bantu peoples is the Baganda, followed by the Iteso, the Banyankore, the Basoga, the Bakiga, the Banyarwanda, the Lango Bagisu, the Acholi, the Lugbara, the Banyoro, the Bator and others. The annual rate of population growth is 3.5% and the average life expectancy is approximately 50 years.
Capital: Kampala (approximately 5,000,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Jinja, Entebbe, Mbale, Gulu.
Languages: English is the official language. Swahili and Luganda are also widely spoken.
Public holidays: October 9, Independence Day.
Geography: Uganda's territory is made up of highlands whose average altitude ranges from 1,200 to 1,300 m above sea level and which gradually descend to the Nile River in the north-west.

The country's highest peaks, which include the continent's most prominent elevations, are to be found in a volcanic range along the Great Rift Valley in the west and south-west, and on Uganda's eastern frontier with Kenya. The tallest of these peaks are Mt. Ruwenzori (5,119 m), the Virunga Range, and in the east Mt.Elgon (4,321 m).

The principal of Uganda's many rivers is the Nile, which has its source in Lake Victoria. The other major rivers are the Asua, a tributary of the Nile, the Semiliki, the Kagera and the Kafu.

The largest basins in Uganda are those of Lake Victoria, which it shares with Kenya and Tanzania and which occupies a part of a large depression between the mountain ranges of East Africa, of Lakes Edward and Albert—which were renamed after Idi Amin Dada and Mobutu Sese Seko respectively, and which fill a part of a tectonic fault along Uganda's frontier with Zaire, being separated by the volcanic Ruwenzori Range—of Lake Kioga in the Nile Valley, and of Lake George, which is by the Kantonga River and is a tributary of Lake Edward.

Uganda's climate is equatorial in character, but its extremes are lessened by the country's altitude, which has a moderating influence on the temperature throughout most of the year.

The forests, which cover 6.2% of Uganda's territory, provide valuable timber, such as ebony, mahogany and other types. A small quantity of natural rubber is gathered in forests covering the slopes around Lakes Albert and Edward.

Fishing in the lakes and rivers is of considerable economic importance, just as is crocodile hunting.

Brief history: For centuries Uganda formed the linguistic and cultural divide between the Nilotic peoples of the north and the Bantu peoples in the south. The intermingling of these peoples gave rise to a number of proto-feudal centralized kingdoms, the oldest of which, Bunyoro, emerged at the end of the 15th century. Its most important successor was the Kingdom of Buganda, a highly characteristic lake-shore kingdom, in the second half of the 19th century, the time when European missionaries arrived in the area.

King Mutesa I of Buganda, threatened by an Egyptian drive to the south, whose objective was control of the sources of the Nile, accepted the assistance of British Protestants and French Catholics, which gave rise to "religious wars" in the 1880s between the native adherents of the two creeds. This period ended only when the British Crown left the colonization of the territory to the British East Africa Company, led by the adventurer Lord Frederic Lugar. In 1894 the Kingdom of Buganda and in 1896 the whole territory of present-day Uganda were proclaimed a British protectorate.

Uganda's economy was based on African peasant farming and the possibility of a European colonization was discarded first in 1916 and definitely in 1922. At first, under the terms of the Uganda Agreement of 1900, the British had decided to convert the Bugandan nobility into a class of large landlords and the peasants were to become their serfs, but the economic and political risks seemed too great and thus in 1916 the land was distributed to the peasants, while high compensation was paid to the Bugandan aristocracy; the British also encouraged—in their own interest–the cultivation of cotton in addition to commercial crops such as coffee, sugar cane and others.

Although it was their most profitable colony in East Africa, Uganda posed some serious problems to the British, because of thousands of immigrants from India, who acted as intermediaries for the African cotton-growers in selling the latter's product, and who owned factories for drying this crop.

The colonial government therefore rapidly instituted a monopoly for British firms on the purchase of cotton and prohibited the establishment of new processing facilities, thus undercutting the interests of the Indian intermediaries and their commercial aspirations and drastically reducing the earnings of the African cotton-growers.

The British instituted in Uganda a highly complex system of administration. On the one hand, there was the "community"(European, Indian, Arab and African) representation in the Legislative Council, common to all the British East African colonies and in effect in Uganda since 1920. On the other hand, under the terms of the 1900 Agreement, when the Kingdom of Buganda was turned into a British protectorate, its traditional, semi-feudal institutions were adapted to meet the requirements of the foreign administration, and some of the kingdom's officials (members of the Baganda ethnic group) became officials of the colonial administration in the other kingdoms and areas constituting Uganda whose status was converted from semi-autonomy to total subordination to British rule.

Slowly, a petty "independent" or salaried (in the colonial administration) African bourgeoisie came into being, which after having been affected by the economic crisis of the 1930s, faced new problems after World War II, posed by some 60,000 unemployed veterans of the Burma campaign. These men increased on many occasions the ranks of small traders and agents of the colonial administration, while in Buganda and the eastern province the production of cotton and coffee gave rise to a relatively prosperous peasantry. Both groups showed hostility towards the well-to-do Indians who were employed in the public service, in banking and commerce, but even within their own ranks the Africans were torn by inter-tribal conflicts, in particular those—emanating from the Buganda particularism and the division between Catholics and Protestants—inherited from the old missionary days.

The 1950s saw the emergence of many political parties as the decolonialization process was in full swing. They included the Democratic Party led by Benedict Kiwanuka, which was Catholic in its character and was formed by the "modernizing" Bagana petty-bourgeoisie, the Uganda People's Congress led by Milton Obote and formed by the merger of his own Uganda People's Union with a faction of Joseph Kiwanuka's Uganda National Congress, which enjoyed the support of ethnic minorities, a part of the intelligentsia and the peasants and which had a platform typical of the "Pan-African Socialism" trend, and, finally, the Kabaka Yeka ("Only the King"), a conservative party championing the Buganda monarchy.

A highly unstable alliance of Obote's UPC and the Kabaka Yeka won the self-determination elections in 1962. When the country gained its independence on October 9 of the same year, Obote became Prime Minister and the King of Buganda the President of the first Ugandan republic.

The UPC-Kabaka Yeka coalition broke up in August 1964. The resulting tension grew until, on February 22, 1966, Obote suspended the federal constitution and ordered the arrest of five cabinet ministers.

Bugandan reaction was not long in resuming its plotting with British support, and on April 15, 1966, Obote decided to dismiss Mutesa as President and to abolish the federal system of government, having himself elected President of a unitary republic.

Mutesa responded by an attempt to secede and called for the assistance of British troops. However, the new President acted swiftly in sending Ugandan troops into the secessionist kingdom, who seized Mutesa, and on May 24, the rebellion was crushed.

Obote pursued a progressive policy of a unitary character. In 1970, he nationalized 88 import and export companies and firms. A new constitution was promulgated, which legitimized the unification of the country and the abolishment of the old kingdoms, which were the base for the old policy of colonial dependence and acted as a brake on Uganda's socio-economic development.

By 1970. the government had under its control 60% of large-scale business establishments, of banking and of the plantations. An electoral commission was established in the same year to prepare the elections to be held in April 1971.

On January 25, 1971, when President Obote was in Singapore, attending a conference of British Commonwealth members convened to protest against the British intention to sell arms to the Republic of South Africa, Major-General Idi Amin Dada, the commander of the Ugandan Army, overthrew the government.

Amin Dada launched a policy directed against the Asian and British economic interests in Uganda, which provoked a massive exodus of Pakistanis and Indians from the country. The government planned a major participation of Ugandan nationals in the economy.

Under the dictatorial rule of Amin Dada, a number of attempted assassinations and coups failed.

On October 31, 1978, Tanzania announced that Ugandan troops had invaded its territory in the western shore of Lake Victoria and had occupied roughly 1,850 sq.km of that territory.

This move provoked a war between the two countries and intervention by the Organization of African Unity—the OAU—as well as by a number of African governments, which tried to find a peaceful solution of the problem.

At the end of 1978 and in the first quarter of 1979, forces opposed to the Amin regime, which had formed a Uganda National Liberation Front, launched a powerful offensive against that regime, resulting—with Tanzanian military assistance—in the fall of Kampala and the institution on April 13, 1979, of a new Ugandan government under Yusuf Lule. That government continued its military operations in different parts of the country until Amin fled and found refuge in Saudi Arabia. Less than three months after his assumption of office, Lule ran into differences with other Front leaders and was replaced by Godfrey Binaisa. Both Lule—who is reported by various sources to have been supported by the Kenyan government—and Binaisa are of Baganda ethnic origin.

The Uganda National Liberation Front, made up of differently motivated political and ideological forces opposed to Amin, established an executive committee of 25 members. The political scene in Uganda at the end of 1979 and the early months of 1980 was characterized by differences within the Front and continued fighting against remnants of the Amin army.

In December 1979, Binaisa dismissed Yoweri Museveni, the Minister of Defence, head of the Front of National Salvation (FRONASA), leader of some 8,000 troops which had participated in the overthrow of the Amin regime and who comes from Ankole in the south of the country. At the beginning of March 1980 Binaisa dismissed his Minister of the Interior, Paul Mugwanga, and appointed him ambassador to the United Nations. Mugwanga represented Milton Obote's Uganda People's Congress, which enjoys great support in the Lango and Acholi tribes and which has some 10,000 loyal troops in the north of the country. Binaisa drew his own support—just as Lule before him—from a group of "centrist" Bagandas, who also had about 10,000 armed men as their military base.

On May 12, 1980, Binaisa was replaced by a military commission, which accused him of administrative inability and tribalism. The commission, which ran the country until December of that year, was headed by Paul Mugwanga; its other members were the army chief-of-staff General Oyite Ojok, Colonel Tito Okello and Yoweri Museveni, who held the post of Vice-Chairman. As was subsequently announced, Binaisa had appealed to the Carter administration and the Thatcher government for their assistance in his efforts to return to power. Two weeks after the change of government, Milton Obote, who had spent more than nine years in exile in Tanzania, returned to Uganda.

In October 1980 2,000 supporters of Amin, led by Issa Lumango, Amin's former chief-of-staff, invaded Uganda's Western Nile Province, where the ex-dictator was born, from the neighbouring countries and killed hundreds of people. The authorities in Kampala reported that this operation had been supported by the so-called National Front for the Survival of Uganda, led from Saudi Arabia by the former Minister of Finance, Moses Ali. The Ugandan Foreign Minister, Otema Alimadi, stated that the Saudi assistance to Amin was being motivated by an alleged "anti-Moslem" activity of the Kampala government; he also accused the governments of Zaire and the Sudan of providing refuge to some 10,000 pro-Amin elements since April 1979.

In general elections held in Uganda in December 1980 four political parties competed: Obote's Uganda People's Congress, the Democratic Party of Paul Kawanga Semogere, a Roman Catholic conservative and Lule's friend, supported by the government in Nairobi, the Uganda Patriotic Movement led by Yoweri Museveni, and the Conservative Party of J.S. Mayanga-Nkunji. The electoral victory of the Uganda People's Congress made Milton Obote one of the very few "fathers of African independence" from the 1960s who has returned to power by overthrowing the very putschist who had overthrown him.

Economy: There are very few up-to-date figures relating to Uganda's economy, due mainly to the conditions that have prevailed in the country since its civil war. According to World Bank figures (1979), Uganda's GNP had been dropping at the annual rate of 0.1% between 1970 and 1977. In the latter year, 55% of the GNP was the share of agriculture, 8% of industry (7% manufacturing) and 37% of services. In the same year the main agricultural product was coffee (220,000 tons); the others included millet, sorghum, beans and other dried legumes, cotton seed and peanuts. The mining industry produces mainly copper ore, but in recent years has suffered a major set-back due to the social and political situation. The latest available figure on Uganda's GNP dates from 1974, when it amounted to about 2,300,000,000 dollars; in the same year the national budget ended with a deficit of 22,000,000 dollars. In 1977, Ugandan exports amounted to 590,000,000 dollars, compared with 241,000,000 dollars worth of imports. The structure of the country's exports in 1976 included 2% of minerals and metals and 98% of primary agricultural commodities, while the import structure showed 11% of foodstuffs, 1% of fuels, 3% of other primary commodities, 44% of machinery and vehicles and 41% of other manufactured goods. In 1977

81% of Ugandan exports went to the advanced capitalist countries, 14% to other developing countries, 4% to the socialist countries and the remaining 1% to petroleum exporting countries with surplus capital. Uganda's foreign debt amounted to 215,000,000 dollars in 1977, while its foreign-exchange reserves exceeded 56,000,000 dollars. According to a U.S. Department of State report issued in 1980, 90% of Uganda's labour force worked in agriculture and a mere 4% in industry.

Government: The Federal Republic of Uganda is administratively divided into four provinces and eight districts. The provinces are those of Buganda, North, East and West. The last one includes the kingdoms of Bunyoro, Ankole and Toro.

Kampala is the capital and the main commercial and industrial centre of Uganda, while Entebbe is the administrative centre.

Executive power is vested in the President, while legislative power is wielded by the National Assembly (dissolved in 1971), whose members include the President, a Prosecutor-General, 92 members elected by popular vote, and 9 members elected by the Assembly proper.

A constitution enacted in October 1966 provided for a unitary form of government with a President as the head of the government, and abolished the old kingdoms. Annulled in 1971, this constitution was restored in December 1980.

Armed forces: Uganda has an army of 20,000 men and an air force of 1,000 men.

A police force of some 2,000 men was formed in 1971.

No official figures regarding the strength of Uganda's armed and police forces have been released since the civil war.

Organizations: The political parties that took part in the general elections held in December 1980 were Milton Obote's Uganda National Congress, the Democratic Party of Paul Kawanga Semogere, the Uganda Patriotic Movement of Yoweri Museveni and the Conservative Party of J.S. Mayanga-Nkunji. The political parties which had been in existence in February 1971 were banned after the military coup carried out by Idi Amin Dada.

Education: The budgetary allocations for education in the period 1976-1977 amounted to 474,000,000 Ugandan chelins. There are 2,447 primary schools in the country with 404,780 pupils and 12,000 teachers, 412 secondary school facilities with 38,062 students and 1,646 teachers, and 36 teacher training-schools with 3,471 students and a teaching staff of 272.

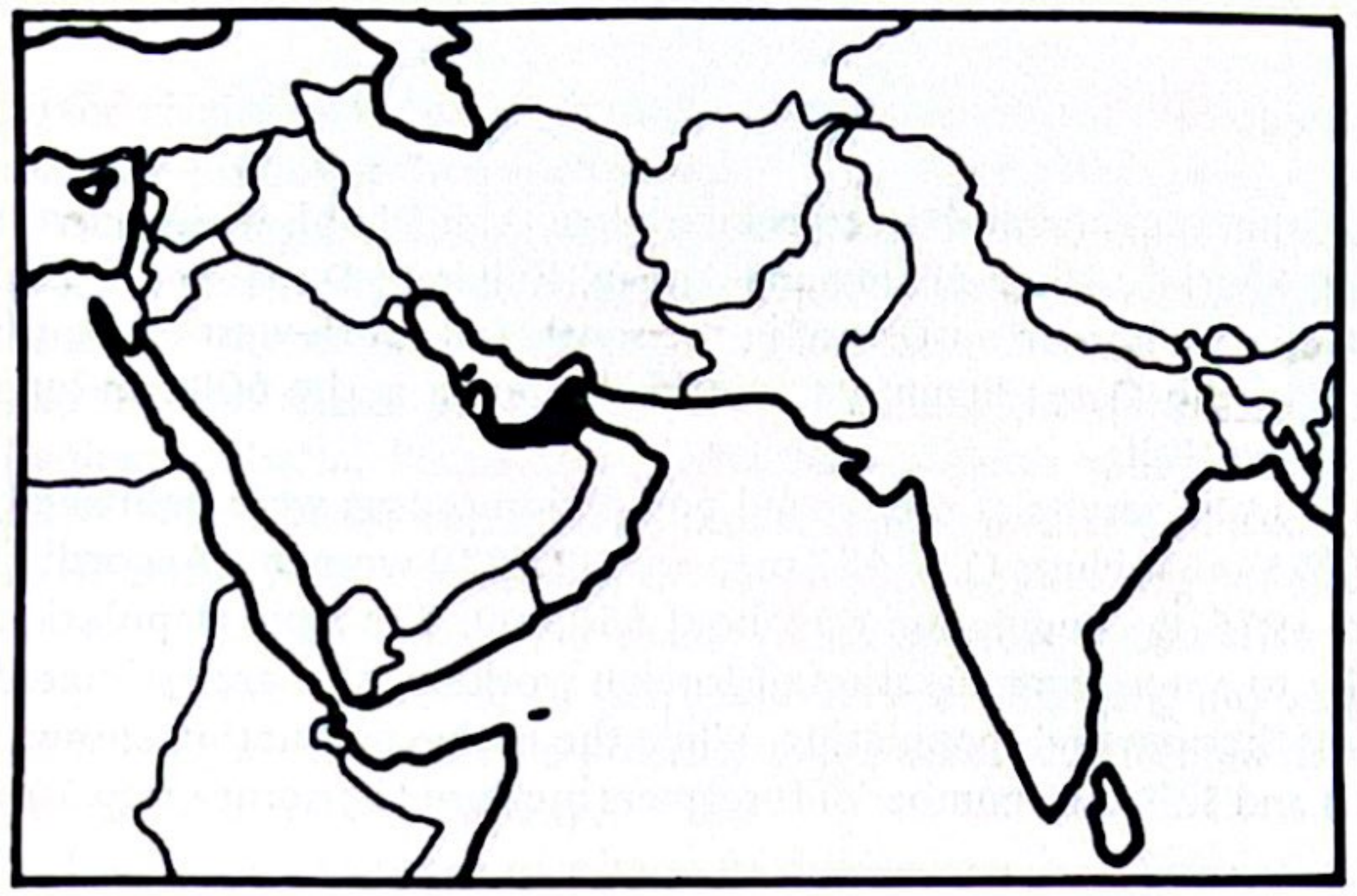
The Makerere University, located in Kampala, has a student body of 1,000 and a teaching staff of 156. There are, in addition, an Anglican Seminary in Mukono and a Diocesan College in Mbale.

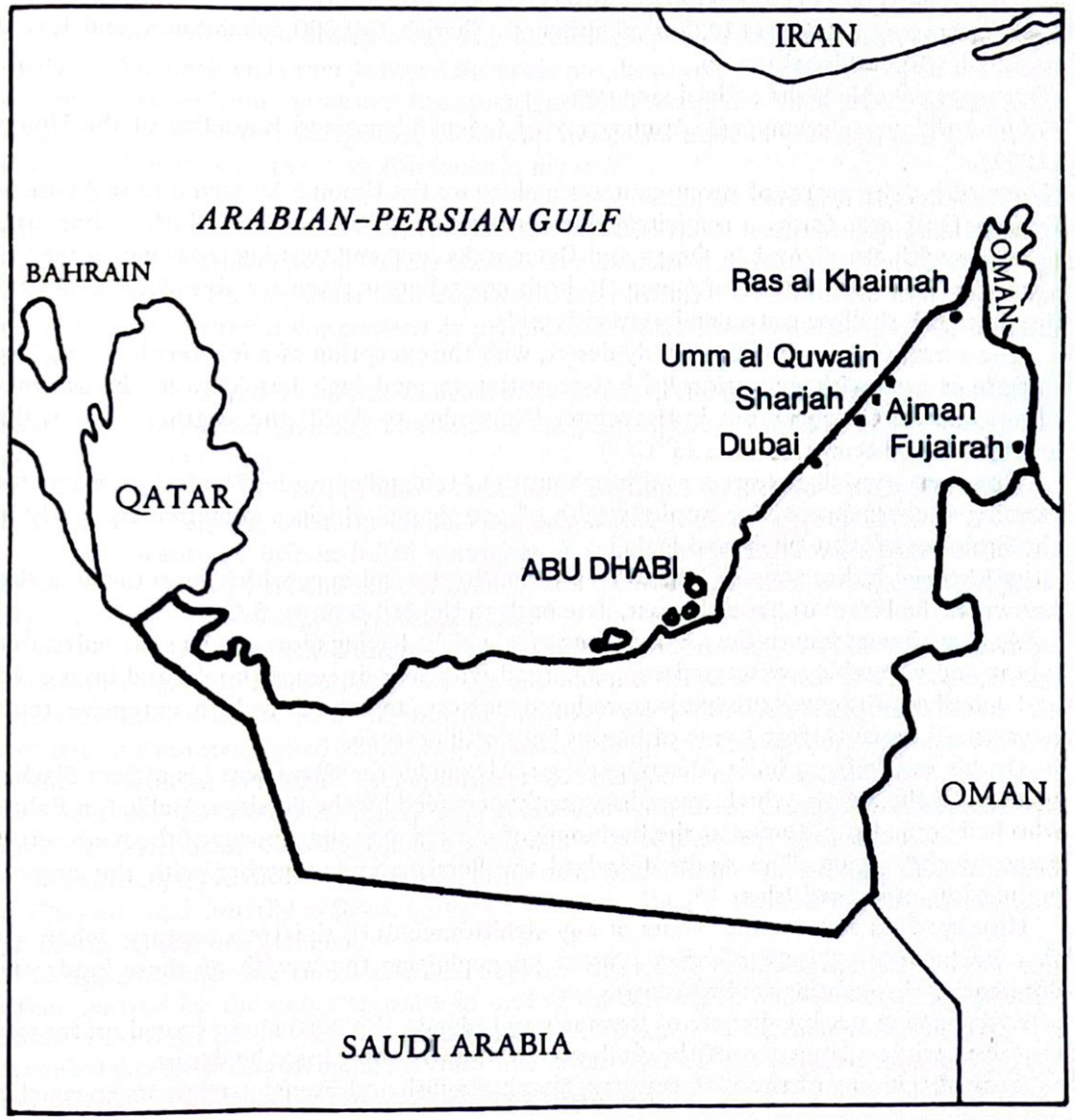
The illiteracy rate in Uganda is 75%.

Public health: In the fiscal year 1976-1977, the public health budget amounted to 250,000,000 Ugandan chelins. The country has 241 hospital facilities with a total capacity of 15,725 beds, 540 doctors, 19 dental surgeons, and 1,627 nurses.

Religion: In Uganda, 50% of the population are Christians, principally of the Roman Catholic creed, according to the most recently available statistics, 40% practise different animist cults and 10% are Moslems.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES





Official name: United Arab Emirates.

Area: 83,600 sq.km.

Borders: The United Arab Emirates consist of seven princedoms: Abu Dhabi, which covers 85% of the whole country, Sharjah, Umm al Quwain, Ajman, Fujairah, Dubai and Ras al Khaimah. In the east the Emirates border on Oman, in the south and south-west on Saudi Arabia, in the north-west on the Qatar Peninsula, and in the north is the 600 km-long coast on the Arabian or Persian Gulf.

Population: In January 1981 the results of the second population census were published, showing a total of 1,040,275 inhabitants (717,455 men and 322,870 women). According to the first census, taken in 1975, the population was about 650,000. The rapid population growth is attributed mainly to a steady immigration of foreign workers, who are estimated to constitute already 85% of the country's population. While the native population showed a growth rate of between 3 and 3.5%, the number of foreigners increased by some 46 to 50% between 1968 and 1977.

Capital: Abu Dhabi (150,000 inhabitants).

Principal towns: Dubai (120,000 inhabitants), Sharjah (60,000 inhabitants) and Ras al Kyaimah (50,000 inhabitants).

Languages: Arabic is the official language.

Public holidays: December 2, Anniversary of Independence and Founding of the Union (1971).

Geography: The group of seven emirates making up the Union is located on the Arabian-Persian Gulf and forms a semicircle dominating the entrance to the Gulf. It has land frontiers with Saudi Arabia, Oman and Qatar and a long and twisting coastline, as well as a narrow exit to the Gulf of Oman. In both coastal areas there are abundant, beautiful beaches with shallow waters and pearl-rich reefs.

The terrain is mostly a flat, sandy desert, with the exception of a few fertile oases. The climate is arid with exceptionally hot temperatures and high humidity in the summer (from May to October), but in the winter (November to April) the weather is mild; the average annual temperature is 25°C.

However, rainfall is scarce, as throughout the Arabian Peninsula. The lack of water for farming is compensated for by the wealth of petroleum, which is exploited especially in the Emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Brief history: Indications of human civilization in the emirates, which form the area also known as the Pirate or Trucial Coast, date back to the 3rd century B.C.

At that time communities existed in the area which—having more fertile soil—cultivated wheat and vegetables, extracted copper, fished with nets or copper hooks and bred goats and gazelles. Moreover, they also produced pottery and developed an extensive trade network. Remnants were found of houses built of limestone.

On his return from India 23 centuries ago, Alexander the Great sent his officer Siarkos to explore the region, which was subsequently occupied by the Persians. Malik Ibn Fahm, who had come from Yemen at the beginning of our era, was the pioneer of the Arab settlement of the region. The Arabs dislodged the Persians and, together with the original population, embraced Islam.

History does not record events of any significance until the 16th century, when the first Portuguese navigators arrived, intent on exploiting the wealth of these lands and dominating the existing trading centres.

After having occupied some of the ports and islands, the Portuguese stayed on for two centuries, while a large part of the Arab population withdrew into the desert.

At the beginning of the 17th century, Dutch, English and French navigators engaged in bitter rivalry to establish their predominance in the Far East, using the Emirates as an intermediate point for their incursions.

The struggle between the Europeans did not affect the local population, which, in its turn, found itself involved in the perpetual conflicts ensuing from the rivalry between the Arabs of the north and those from the south, who were locally represented by the Shafiri and Hinawi clans. In spite of this situation, the extensive trade between the Arabian Peninsula, India, Persia and Lower Mesopotamia spurred the prosperity of some of the ports. The intense commercial traffic attracted Arab and European pirates who, from the 17th century on, operated in the region, taking advantage of the many convenient natural shelters along the coast. The main victims of these pirates were Portuguese ships.

Later, the Emirates, in particular Ras al Khaimah, imposed duties on foreign ships anchoring in their ports, a practice which adversely affected the economic interests of the British East India Company.

Using the existence of piracy in those waters as a pretext, the British government and the aforementioned company undertook a repressive operation in 1819. A naval squadron landed a force of 2,000 armed men, who methodically destroyed the ships and defences of Ras al Khaimah and other ports on the coast not, however, without having to overcome strong resistance from the weaker Arab vessels skilfully manned by their crews. Thus Britain secured for herself free navigation, communications and trade in the Gulf, and imposed a number of treaties on the Arab chieftains in the area.

A General Peace Treaty was signed on August 8, 1820, by Ras al Khaimah, and later the other Emirates followed suit. In 1853, a Perpetual Naval Peace Treaty was signed. In March 1892 Britain imposed on the Emirates an Exclusive Agreement, under which she acquired the right to supervise their external relations while they moreover undertook not to make any territorial concessions or permit on their territory non-British governmental missions.

Between 1911 and 1922 amendments were added to the treaties, which prevented the Arab chieftains from granting concessions for pearl-fishing, gathering of sea sponges or petroleum prospecting.

The division of the region into a number of Emirates facilitated British domination. For the same purpose, tribal differences and animosities were being promoted.

In the meantime, Britain foiled a number of attempts to gain domination of the area by Ottoman Turks, Persians and the French, and secured for herself the exclusive right to exploit the petroleum deposits located there.

In 1967, Great Britain withdrew from southern Arabia and in 1968 announced her intention to give up the Gulf coast by the end of 1971. In view of this situation, the Arab rulers deemed it useful to unite, and on February 19, 1968, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, the two largest Emirates, signed a merger agreement. Subsequently, four more Emirates acceded to the agreement, and all of them jointly gained independence on December 2, 1971. On that occasion, all the earlier agreements concluded with Great Britain were replaced by a Treaty of Friendship between the new state and the withdrawing colonial power.

In February 1972 the Emirate of Ras al Khaimah, whose ruler, Sheik Saqr Ben Mohammed al Qassimi, had initially refused to join the union, finally entered the federation, thus becoming its seventh member.

In spite of the traditional disputes between the ruling families, the union came into effect spurred by the desire to unite in face of the threat posed by powerful neighbouring states. Two days before the proclamation of the new state, Mohammed Reza Pahlavi's Iran occupied three strategic islands in the Gulf—Abu Musa over which Sharjah claims sovereignty, and the two Tomb islands, claimed by Ras al Khaimah.

This latter Emirate was involved in a dispute with the Sultanate of Oman in 1978 over the frontier line in a desert zone suspected of containing petroleum deposits. This provoked some conflict inside the union, which has been cautious in its relations with its more powerful neighbours.

The constitution of the federation of the seven Emirates was the second attempt, this time successful, to form an association of the principalities in this particular area since the British announcement of withdrawal from the British possessions east of Suez. In 1968 the present seven members of the union, Bahrein and Qatar announced their intention to establish a federation and set up a Federal Council charged with the implementation of an agreement concluded in principle. However, a number of internal differences and pressure from the neighbouring states frustrated this attempt, as announced in October 1970.

Bahrein and Qatar proclaimed their independence prior to the formation of the federation of the seven Emirates in 1971.

In the summer of 1971 the Union of Arab Emirates was admitted as a member to the Arab League, and on December 9 of the same year to the United Nations. In 1973 the Emirates participated for the first time in the Summit Conference of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in Algiers.

The Emirates have always shown solidarity with the Arab countries fighting for the return of the territories occupied by Israel in the 1967 and 1973 wars.

The union of the seven principalities was strengthened in the first decade of its existence, in spite of a constant, latent controversy between the opponents and the advocates of greater federal authority, and of the obvious economic disparity of its members.

Sheik Zayed Ben Sultan al-Nahayan, the Emir of Abu Dhabi, the largest and economically most powerful of the seven Emirates, has presided over the union ever since its founding, having been re-elected for another term as Head of State in November 1976. In that same year the armed forces of the Emirates were unified; until then the question of their unification had been a major problem impeding the complete merger of the government institutions. Nevertheless, indications were reported in 1978 of friction over the control of the common armed forces.

In May 1976, too, the drafting began of a plan of building joint economic projects and of eliminating the absence of co-ordination in the respect, which on occasions affected the competence of the different members of the union.

In 1979 Rashid Ben Said al Maktum, the Emir of Dubai, was designated Prime Minister in a move generally interpreted as intended to strengthen the unitary character of the state. At present, the federation is responsible for a common police force, immigration policy, telecommunications, road building, public health, electricity production and co-ordination of defence problems.

The union members are:

Abu Dhabi which has an area of 70,500 sq.km and is the richest of the seven Emirates, due to its large petroleum resources commercially exploited since 1962. 80% of its total population of more than 300,000 are foreigners. In 1968, a serious programme of industrialization was launched in the form of the first five-year development plan. At present, production began of liquefied natural gas for export and an ambitious project of an industrial centre is under construction in Ruwais. Cement factories in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain produced 205,000 tons of cement in 1977. In 1980 a new airport was opened, which had been built at a cost of 312,000,000 dollars.

Dubai is the second most important Emirate. Its principal urban centres are Dubai and Deira, and there is also a large port of Rashid, which is currently being completed and is considered to be the most efficient and cheapest in the whole Gulf area. Dubai has an area of 3,900 sq.km and a population in excess of 250,000. The percentage of foreigners is approximately the same as in Abu Dhabi.

Before the discovery of petroleum in 1966, Dubai's economy was extremely underdeveloped, although it had been a traditional commercial centre in the Gulf, a position it has retained to this day.

The future role of petroleum in Dubai's economy is known to be limited, since the proven reserves of some 1,300 million barrels should be exhausted within ten years at the present rate of exploitation. Consequently, several development projects are under construction, including an industrial community at Jebel Ali. The Emirate was the first one in the union to nationalize its petroleum operations in 1975.

The Emir, whose family has ruled Dubai since 1833, holds interest in most of the local enterprises and industries and gets the whole income derived from petroleum exploitation, which in 1978 was estimated at 1,200,000,000 dollars.

Sharjah is the most fragmented of the Emirates and the third in size. Its population is 90,000, half of it living in the capital. It has two important ports and an international airport. Its petroleum industry is obviously declining and the existing reserves may be exhausted within three years. Petroleum production has dropped from 40,000 barrels daily in 1975 to 24,000 barrels in 1978. The Emirate has a relatively well developed agriculture and is currently building several factories, including production of cement, chemicals and paper.

Ras al Khaimah has the largest agricultural production on the approximate area of 1,700 sq. km. Its natural conditions also permit it to engage in livestock production, and there is, in addition, a successful fishing industry. About half of its population of some 57,000 is employed in the fishing industry and in agriculture. In 1978 small-scale exploitation began of petroleum from the sea bed. It is estimated that the Emirate has some mineral resources and at present it exports limestone to Saudi Arabia.

Fujairah with 27,000 inhabitants is the least developed of the seven Emirates and is totally dependent on agriculture and fishing. In recent years, copper and chromium ore deposits have been discovered, but their commercial exploitation has not begun. Its agricultural products include tobacco and citrus fruit. For some years now, prospecting has been going on for petroleum, but thus far without any success.

Umm al Quwaim is basically a community of fishermen. Most of its income is derived from fishing and from petroleum concessions granted to foreign companies, although there is no commercial exploitation of this commodity.

Ajman has 22,000 inhabitants and is the smallest of the union's members, with its area of barely 250 sq. km. Its territory is greatly fragmented and its economy is essentially based on the provision of services in view of its tourist attractions. It is the only one of the seven Gulf Emirates that has no petroleum industry or prospective petroleum resources

Economy: The Emirates' economy is based on petroleum extraction, which accounts for 98% of their income. In 1980 petroleum production exceeded 3,000,000 metric tons, being the eighth largest among the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). The major part of this production comes from Abu Dhabi (79% of the total in 1978) and Dubai (20%). The latest available figures show that in 1977 the United Arab Emirates had earned some 9,700 million dollars from petroleum exports. The main customers are Japan, the United States, France and the Netherlands.

There is official concern about the exhaustion of the existing petroleum reserves, and in some cases this has led to reduced production. In January 1981 Dubai ordered its petroleum extraction to be cut down to 80,000 barrels daily.

In the industrial sphere, the principal efforts are directed at the development of an industry producing petroleum derivatives and of refineries, as well as at production of liquefied natural gas. Then, large investments are made into the production of aluminium and of building materials, mostly cement. An ambitious plan, revealed in 1975, envisages investments of some 20,000,000,000 dollars into industrial development until 1985.

Some progress is reported in agricultural development, although in 1977 food imports still amounted to 465,000,000 dollars.

The Emirates have a favourable balance of trade. In 1979, exports amounted to more than 9,000,000,000 dollars, while imports—mostly of industrial equipment, vehicles and consumer goods—totalled 5,368,000,000 dollars and came mostly from Japan, Great Britain, the United States, the Federal Republic of Germany and India.

Foreign-exchange reserves are estimated to have been 1,432,000,000 dollars in 1979, following a considerable drop caused three years earlier by a major banking crisis.

Abu Dhabi bears approximately 90% of the national budget, which amounted to some 10,500,000,000 dirhams in 1978- a 20% reduction compared with the previous year. Most expenditure continues to go into national defence, which accounts for one-third of the total budgetary outlays. The Emirates lacking petroleum resources depend largely on the national budget for their income.

The national currency is the UAE dirham, which was devalued in 1980 and whose rate of exchange is 2.75 per U.S. dollar. The union opposes a project for the creation of a common currency for the Gulf states.

The United Arab Emirates are a member of the International Monetary Fund and of the Arab Monetary Fund, which has its headquarters in Abu Dhabi and which was established by the Arab League in 1977. The Abu Dhabi Fund for Arab Economic Development granted loans to Arab and African countries in the amount of 1,323,000,000 dollars up to 1979.

The gross national product in 1978 amounted to 11,480,000,000 dollars and the per capita GNP stood at 14,350 dollars in the same year.

Government: Since its foundation the Union has been governed under a Provisional Constitution originally conceived to cover a transitional period of five years, but extended in November 1976 for another term. This constitution defines the duties of the federal government bodies—the Supreme Council, the Federal Government, the Federal National Assembly and the Federal Judiciary. A permanent constitution was to have been promulgated in 1976, but ran into opposition from advocates of a more flexible federal system of government than the system proposed by the new constitution.

The Supreme Council is made up of the Emirs of the seven members of the union and is the basic governing body of the federal state. Its jurisdiction covers defence matters, foreign relations, education, finances and economic development. Each ruler possesses his own competence in his respective territory in local administrative matters and domestic policy. The Supreme Council decides by a majority of at least five of its members, and its President and Vice-President—the Emirs of Abu Dhabi and Dubai respectively—have the right of veto.

The Federal Government or Cabinet is vested with executive power in the union. It is accountable to the Supreme Council, whose President appoints the Prime Minister after consultation with the other council members. In general, there is to be a certain division of the cabinet posts among the seven Emirates, but in the recent cabinets accent was given to efficiency of the government rather than to distribution of the ministerial seats among representatives of different Emirates.

The Federal National Council was constituted in 1972, and it is actually made up of 40 members appointed by the Emirs. The Assembly discusses Bills drawn up by the Government before they are ratified by the Supreme Council. The seats are divided among the seven Emirates in a fixed ratio.

The federal judiciary consists of a Supreme Court and a court of first instance.

Armed forces: The armed forces of the United Arab Emirates are estimated to number 26,150 men, 23,500 of whom are in the army, 900 in the navy, and 1,750 in the air force. The union has 52 modern combat planes, including French-made Mirages 2S and 5S.

Education and the press:: Although there had been practically no schools in the area until 1952, the petroleum boom has permitted a rapid expansion of the educational system under the policy of the federal government to establish schools in all parts of the country in order to reduce as much as possible migration to the cities. The educational system enjoys ample financial support provided from the federal budget.

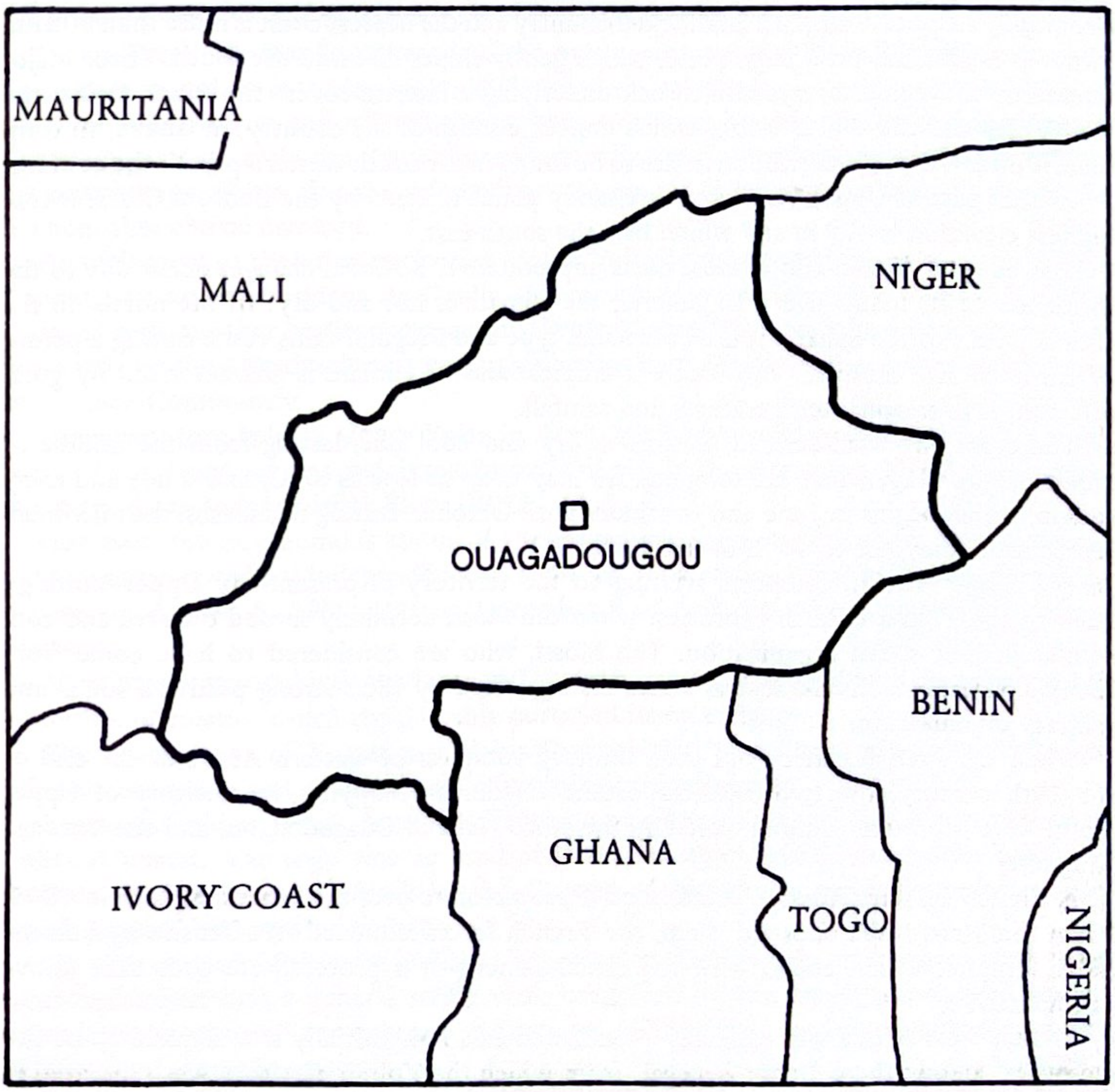
At present, the illiteracy rate has dropped below 20%, compared with 80% in 1968. The 1978 budget allocated 1,241,000,000 dirhams for education, which is extended currently to 94,425 pupils in 350 schools. There is a university in Abu Dhabi, which was opened in 1977 and which had an enrolment of 3,000 students in 1980.

Two weeklies are published in Arabic and two in English, as well as two major dailies. Radio stations broadcasting in Arabic are located in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah and Ras al Khaimah.

Public health: Basic medical services are provided free of charge. In 1978, the public health budget was 903,000,000 dirhams. According to the latest data, there were 681 doctors in the country in 1977 and ten hospitals, with 1,914 beds.

Religion: Islam is the main religion, mostly of the Sunni branch.

UPPER VOLTA


MAURITANIA
MALI
NIGER
OUAGADOUGOU
BENIN
GHANA
IVORY COAST
TOGO
NIGERIA

Official name: The Republic of Upper Volta.

Area: 274,200 sq. km.

Borders: In the north and the west Upper Volta borders on Mali, in the south on the Ivory Coast, Ghana and Togo, and in the east on Benin and Niger.

Population: 5,553,000 inhabitants (1978). The annual rate of population growth in the period 1980-1974 was 2.3%. The population of Upper Volta consists of two large ethnic groups—the Voltaic group, which is formed by the Mossi (3,700,000), the Gourounsi (210,000), the Lobo (190,000) and the Lobi (90,000), and the Mande group, which is subdivided into the Samo (100,000), the Marka (80,000), the Boussanse (50,000), the Senufo (50,000) and the Dyola or Diouala (30,000). Other small tribal groups living in Upper Volta include the Hausa, the Fulani, the Tuareg and the Bella.

Capital: Ouagadougou.

Principal towns: Bobo-Dioulasso and Koudougou.

Languages: French is the official language. Other languages are also widespread, such as More, which is spoken by the Mossi tribe and is used by the majority of the population, and Diala, which is used in local business transactions.

Public holidays: December 11, Day of the Proclamation of the Autonomous Republic; August 5, Independence Day; January 3, Anniversary of the Revolution.

Geography: Upper Volta is a landlocked country and the nearest coast is more than 500 km away. It is situated on a large plain, which gently slopes down to the south. Three major rivers cut through the crystalline rock underlying a laterite cover—the Black Volta, the Red Volta and the White Volta, which converge south of the country, in Ghana, to form Lake Volta. Other Volta tributaries are to be found in the south-western part of the country.

In that part of Upper Volta, too, are sandy plains rimmed by the Banfora Cliffs, whose highest elevation is 479 m and which face the south-east.

The country is arid and in most parts unproductive. Seasonal changes occur due to the influence of its many rivers. In general, the climate is hot and dry. In the north, in the area adjacent to the Sahara, it is of the Sahel type and irregular rains come during a period of three to five months. The south is tropical and its climate is characterized by great differences in seasonal temperatures and rainfall.

There are two well-defined seasons—a dry and cool one, lasting from the middle of November to May, when the temperature may drop as low as 10°C, and a hot and rainy season, which begins in June and continues until October. During this season the maximum temperature may rise to 40°C in the shade.

Brief history: The first reports relating to the territory of present-day Upper Volta go back to the 11th and 12th centuries, when the Mossi definitely settled the area and consolidated their social organization. The Mossi, who are considered to have come from today's Niger, established several states distinguished by their strong political, social and military organization.

When the French carried out their military conquest of western Africa at the end of the 19th century, the two most important kingdoms occupying the territory of Upper Volta were the Mossi Empire, ruled by the Moro Naba of Ouagadougou, and the Yatenga Kingdom.

A French military mission established a protectorate over the latter kingdom in 1895. When the Moro Naba opposed them, the French forces launched an offensive against the Mossi Empire, which ended with the establishment of a protectorate over that native realm in 1896.

French West Africa was officially proclaimed in 1904. Initially it was made up of five countries, among them Upper Senegal, from which the Voltaic territory was separated in 1919 as the colony of Upper Volta. Upper Volta became a part of French West Africa, while the rest of the territory of Upper Senegal was renamed the French Sudan (today's Mali).

During World War I, the inhabitants of Upper Senegal and thus also of the future Upper Volta were subjected to what the French called the "War Effort", which was in fact a stepped-up colonial exploitation. Many Africans from this region served in the French army during the war.

The colony of Upper Volta was abolished in 1932 and its territory was divided between the French colonies of the Ivory Coast, French Sudan and Niger. However, after World War II the colony of Upper Volta was re-constituted, in 1947.

A year earlier, in 1946, the Voltaic Democratic Union was founded as a section of the African Democratic Union (RDA) and was led by Ouezzin Coulibaly, Ousmane Ba and Maurice Yameogo.

Yameogo was appointed in 1947 a member of the French Grand Council of West Africa, became Minister of Agriculture in 1955 and Minister of the Interior in 1956.

Under the provisions of the *Loi-Cadre* (the Framework Law), passed by the French National Assembly on June 23, 1956, granting partial autonomy to French colonial territories, elections were held in Upper Volta in 1957 to constitute its first Territorial Assembly. They were won by Maurice Yameogo's Voltaic Democratic Union.

When Charles de Gaulle returned to the presidency and the Fifth Republic came into being French policy in Africa took a different form. De Gaulle made an extensive tour of the French territories and offered them either to choose by referendum to join a French Community or to retain the status of overseas territories. Somewhat later, de Gaulle offered yet another possibility for the referendum—to opt for independence with all the consequences that choice involved.

As with most of the other territories, Upper Volta opted for membership in the French Community under President de Gaulle. There was also an Executive Council based in Paris, as well as other bodies representing the territories. The new autonomous status also provided for the constitution of executive bodies in the individual member-countries of the French Community.

Elections were held in Upper Volta in April 1959 and were again won by Yameogo's party. Thus Yameogo was appointed Prime Minister. In the same year, Nazi Boni founded the Republican Independence Party (PRL).

However, the autonomous status of the French territories was of short duration, since most of them opted for independence in 1960. Upper Volta was granted independence by France on August 5, 1960, and on December 8 of that year Yameogo was proclaimed President.

After having granted independence to Upper Volta, France signed with the new republic a number of treaties which considerably curtailed its sovereignty.

The government of Yameogo and his Democratic Union Party was characterized by official corruption and abuse of public funds for private benefit.

Elections held in 1965, in which Yameogo was the only candidate, were marked by political unrest. Yameogo was accused of having misappropriated more than 1,000,000 pounds sterling from the funds of the Council of Entente, a regional organization of which Upper Volta was a member.

By the end of 1965, the political situation in the country had grown very tense. Demonstrations and a general strike were organized by the trade unions, and student organizations accused Yameogo of having used public funds for financing the festivities celebrating his new marriage.

Yameogo was deposed on January 3, 1966, by a military coup headed by the then Colonel Aboubakar Sangoule Lamizana, the Chief of Staff of the Voltaic army.

The new government put into effect some economic austerity measures in order to deal with the serious economic situation in which the country—one of the poorest in Africa—had found itself. Initially, the military government envisaged its mandate as transitional, but shortly after the coup it announced that it would stay in power for four years.

A disastrous drought struck the country in the early 1970s and the serious economic situation grew still worse. The government tried to open new commercial relations—also with some socialist countries—in an attempt to overcome the economic problems.

A new constitution was enacted in 1970, under which a National Assembly was elected. The Democratic Union won 37 of the 57 seats in that body. In January 1971, its leader, Gerard Kango Ouedraogo, was designated Prime Minister, while General Lamizana retained the presidency.

The Ouedraogo government, just as the Yameogo regime earlier, was accused of misappropriating public funds for personal profit. On February 8, 1974, Ouedraogo was dismissed, the National Assembly was dissolved, and constitutional rights and guarantees were suspended. Once again, the army under General Lamizana seized power, which, in fact, it had never abandoned.

The brief duration of the National Reconstruction Movement (MNR), founded by the government in 1976, marked the beginning of a return to civilian government.

The draft of a new constitution was submitted to the electorate for approval, and on November 27, 1977, it was adopted by a large majority. It provided for new elections within a period of six months. Under this new constitution, the President is elected by popular vote for a term of five years and may be re-elected only once. It also stipulates that the President appoints the Prime Minister and the members of his cabinet, and that parliamentary elections must precede the election of the President.

The parliamentary election was held on April 30, 1978, and 57 members were elected from a slate of 375 candidates representing eight pclitical parties.

Under the constitution adopted on November 27, 1977, the elected candidates would serve for five years. Meanwhile, the eight political parties which had entered the electoral contest in six political groupings had to merge into three, the maximum number permitted by the constitutional provisions regarding the General Assembly.

The parties were: the Voltaic Democratic Union (UDV), the territorial section of the African Democratic Union (RDA), the National Union for the Defence of Democracy (UNDD), the Voltaic Progressive Union (UPV), the African Re-Alignment Party (PRA), the Popular Action Group (GAP), the National Re-Alignment Party (PRN), the National Union of Independents (MNI) and the National Union of PRA Independents (IPRA).

The election results were discouraging. Of the total electorate of 2,887,550 only 1,200,000 voters, i.e., less than 50% went to the polls. The parties which emerged victorious were the Voltaic Democratic Union (UDV), which won 28 of the 57 seats, the National Union for the Defence of Democracy (UNDD), with 13 seats, and the Voltaic Progressive Union with nine seats, while the remaining seven seats were divided among the other parties.

Four candidates entered the presidential election held on May 4, 1978: General Aboubakar Sangoule Lamizana, the incumbent President, who was backed by the UDV, PRA, GAP, UNI and PRN parties, Joseph Ouedraogo, the former chairman of the National Assembly, who headed the so-called Rejection Front of the RDA, Joseph Ki Zerbo, a progressive university professor, who was the UPV candidate, and Macaire Ouedraogo, representing the UNDD.

None of the four candidates won the necessary number of votes for the presidency,

and new voting was thus required. The first presidential election was also marked by great abstention of the electorate. Nevertheless, General Lamizana's position as the incumbant made him a favourite for the second round of the election.

The second round of voting took place on May 28. Voters were to choose between the two candidates who had won the largest vote in the first round. Once again, voter abstention from the polls was similar as in the parliamentary election in April. Of the 2,947,527 eligible voters only 1,283,546 went to the polls and 18,868 ballots were disqualified. General Lamizana received 711,722 votes against 552,959 cast for Macaire Ouedraogo. Thus General Lamizana was re-elected by 55.45% of the ballots cast.

A new government was constituted in July 1978 with Joseph Conombo as Prime Minister. Also established was the tripartite system provided for by the constitution. The three political parties in existence since then are the UDV-RDA, the UNDD and the FPV (the Voltaic Progressive Front) which was formed in 1979 by a merger of the UPV of Joseph Ki Zerbo and the RDA Rejection Front led by Joseph Ouedraogo.

Many strikes took place in 1979 and 1980 and a military coup led by Colonel Saye Zerbo was carried out in November 1980, establishing a Military Committee of Reconstruction and National Progress (CMRPN).

Economy: Upper Volta's economy is based on agriculture, which is pursued on 5,600,000 hectares of the total cultivable area of 27,380,000 hectares by 80% of the economically active population. According to FAO data published in 1978, Upper Volta produced: 330,000 tons of millet, 621,000 tons of sorghum, 180,000 tons of dried legumes, 70,000 tons of peanuts, and 7,000 tons of sesame. There were 2,000,000 head of cattle, 1,450,000 sheep, and 2,300,000 goats. The woods produced 4,370,000 cu.m of timber in 1973. The fish catch in 1978 was 7,000 tons. Electricity production was 60,000,000 kWh in 1976. The 1978 gross national product amounted to 870,000,000 dollars and the per capita GNP to 160 dollars, while the 1978 national budget was balanced at 30,580,000,000 CFA francs. The 1977 balance of trade showed a deficit of 37,750,000,000 CFA francs (51,364,000,000 CFA francs of imports and 13,614,000,000 CFA francs of exports). The country's serious economic situation has caused the emigration of hundreds of thousands of Voltaics, mainly to Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Upper Volta's foreign-exchange reserves in 1977 amounted to 56,400,000 dollars, while its external public debt in 1975 was 62,900,000 dollars. The national currency is the CFA franc.

Government: Since November 1980 Upper Volta is governed by a Military Committee of Reconstruction and National Progress. The new government is made up of 17 members and is presided over by Colonel Zerbo, who also holds the offices of the head of state, the Minister of Defence and Veteran Affairs and Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces.

Armed forces: In 1979 Upper Volta's armed forces consisted of 4,070 troops, of whom 50 served in the air force. There are such other armed corps as the gendarmerie with 1,050 men, the National Guard of 1,200 men, and the Civilian Police of 400 men.

Organizations: Prior to the coup of November 25, 1980, there were eight political parties in the country in 1977, and three since 1978: the Voltaic Democratic Union (UDV), the National Union for the Defence of Democracy (UNDD), and the Voltaic Progressive Front (FPV). There are also the following trade union organizations: the Voltaic Organization of Free Trade Unions, founded in 1960, which has 2,500 members and whose Secretary-General is Bonifail Kabore, the Confederation of Voltaic Trade Unions, founded in 1950 and affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions, whose Secretary-General is E. Ouedraogo, and the National Confederation of Voltaic Workers, which was founded in 1958 and whose Secretary-General is Soumana Traore; it publishes a periodical called Action.

Education: Education in Upper Volta is free but not compulsory. In the first years following independence only 11% of children of school age attended classes. About 90% of the population are illiterate. By 1976, 16% of children of school age actually went to school.

The government has done little to advance the enlightenment of the population. In the school term 1975-1976, only a modest 141,177 children went to primary schools and 16,227 students attended secondary schools.

A centre of higher education was established in 1969, which in 1974 was turned into the University of Ougadougou. It had an enrolment of 1,067 students in the school year 1975-1976.

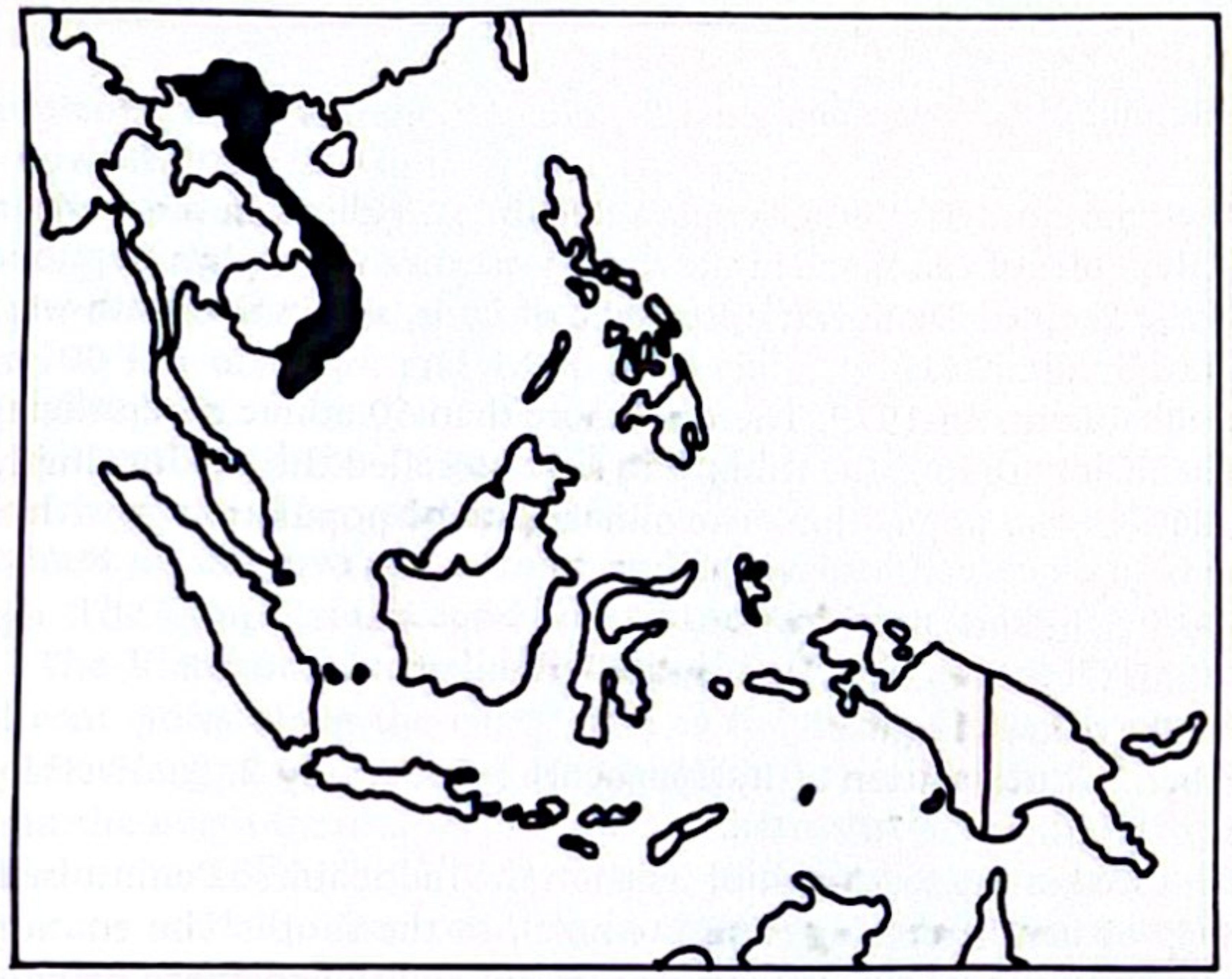
Public health: In 1977, Upper Volta had 51 doctors, i.e., one for every 118,000 inhabitants. 48 of them practised in the capital.

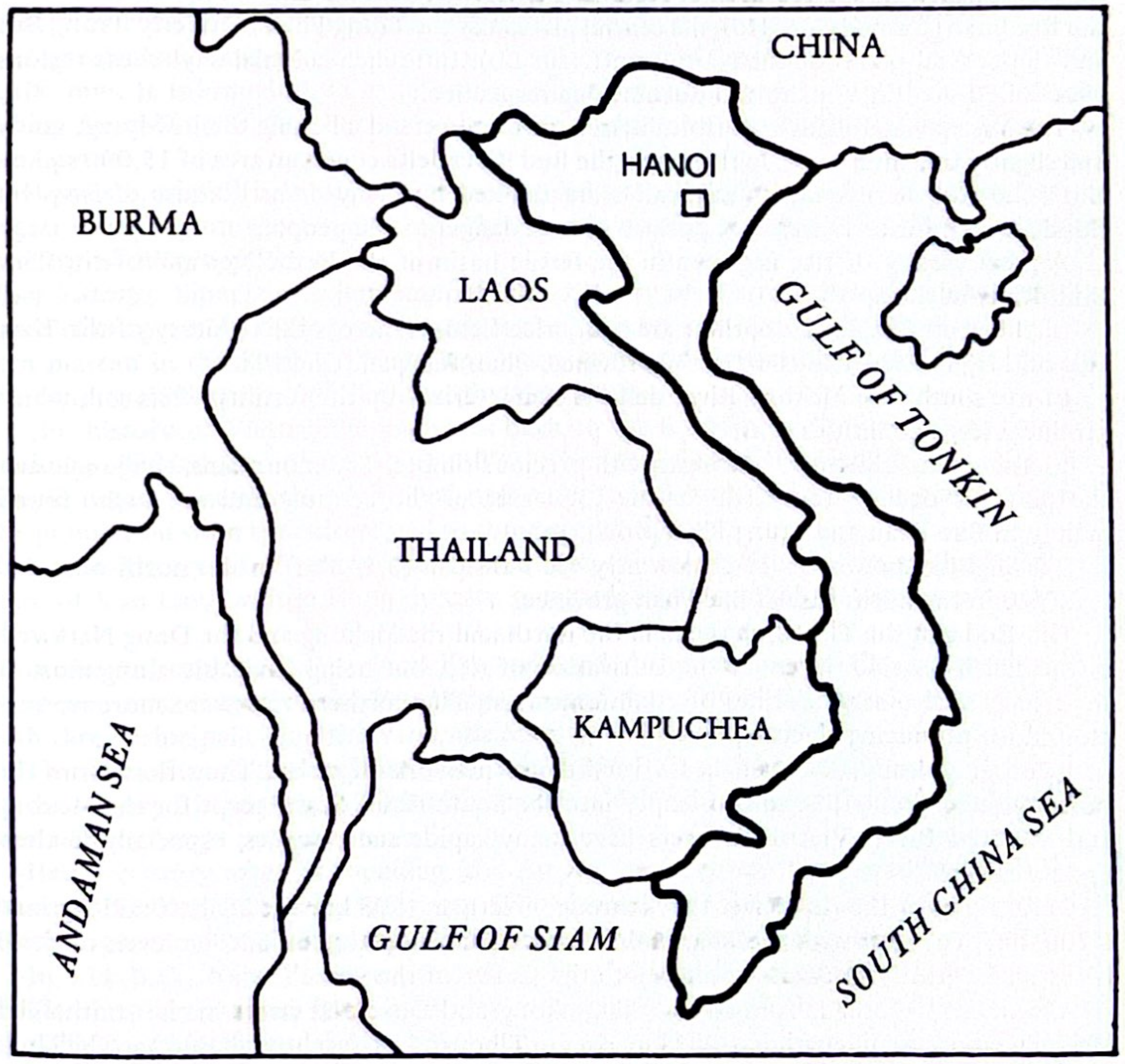
The per capita daily calorie intake in Upper Volta is 1,940, which is less than the minimum established by the FAO, i.e., 2,350.

75% of the population, especially in the rural areas, have no access to modern medical care.

Religion: The majority of the population practise the traditional African religious cults. There are about 1,000,000 Moslems in the country and some 200,000 Roman Catholics.

VIETNAM





Official name: Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

Area: 329,600 sq.km.

Borders: In the north Vietnam borders on the People's Republic of China, in the west on the People's Democratic Republic of Laos, and in the south-west on the People's Republic of China, in the west on the People's Democratic Republic of Laos, and in the south-west on the People's Republic of Kampuchea.

Population: 52,741,766 inhabitants in 1979. There are more than 60 ethnic groups living in the country today. The major group is the Kinh, who are also called the Viet or simply Vietnamese; they form 85% of the population. The annual rate of population growth is 2.1%.

Capital: Hanoi (2,570,905 inhabitants).

Principal cities: Ho Chi Minh City, Haiphong, Hue and others.

Languages: Vietnamese is the official language.

Public holidays: September 2, Proclamation of Independence (1945); July 2, Anniversary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (1976).

Geography: Vietnam is located in the south-east of Asia, on the Indochinese Peninsula. It is a narrow, S-shaped strip of land stretching from the north to the south. The country may be divided into three natural regions: the northern massif and the northern delta or the Bac Phan (formerly Bac Ho); the central plateau or the Trung Phan (formerly Trung Bo) and the coastal plains or the Nam Phan (Nam Bo). In French colonial days these regions were called Tonkin, Annam and Cochinchina respectively.

The Vietnamese plains are of an alluvial nature and extend all along the low-lying, sandy and slightly indented coast. In the north, the Red River delta covers an area of 15,000 sq.km. Both the Red River and its tributaries are flanked by many dams because of frequent floods, which for centuries have posed a serious danger to the people.

A great variety of rice is grown in the fertile basin of the Red River and of the Thai Binh River in the north.

In the central region, too, there are many rice fields all across the territory of the Than Hoa and Nghe An plateaus up to the provinces Phan Rang and Phan Tiet.

In the south, the Mekong River delta is characterized by the fertility of its soil, which produces large quantities of rice.

Vietnam has vast tracts of forests with precious timber. The mountains, the jungle and the plateaus occupy four-fifths of the total area of the country and are to be found mainly in Bac Than and Trung Phan provinces.

The highest mountains in the country are Fansipan (3,142 m) in the north-west and Pia Quac in the north-east of Bac Phan province.

The Red and the Thai Binh rivers in the north and the Mekong and the Dong Nai rivers in the south provide water for the cultivation of rice, but being navigable along most of their length, also serve as lines of communication. The northern rivers are moreover exploited for producing electric power.

Hydrographically, Vietnam has a very dense network of rivers. They flow from the north-west to the south-east and empty into the South China Sea. Except for the Mekong and the Red River, Vietnam's rivers have many rapids and cascades, especially in their upper reaches.

Only a part of the Red River flows through Vietnam (508 km out of its total length of 1,200 km). Together with the Thai Binh it forms a vast northern basin. The levels of these two streams greatly fluctuate according to the season of the year.

Another vast basin is formed by the Mekong and Dong Nai rivers in the south. The Mekong, whose total length is 4,083 km, rises in Tibet and passes through Burma, Thailand, the People's Democratic Republic of Laos and Kampuchea before it enters Vienam where it flows for only 220 km.

The hydroelectric potential of the Red River and its tributary, the Da, is the highest among the northern rivers.

In central Vietnam, the latent potential of the Chu River, the largest in that area with its 300 km of length and 1,000 m of inclination, including great rapids, is estimated at 300,000 kWh.

Altogether, there are some 75 rivers in Vietnam with a great potential for producing electric power. The greatest potential in this respect in the south is in the Dong Nai river, because of its powerful current and many cascades, some of them more than 1,000 m high. The Dong Nai is second only to the Red River in its hydroelectric potential.

The Vietnamese coastline is more than 2,500 km long. There are many bays and magnificent ports along the coast, such as Haiphong, Cun Long and Ben Thuy in the north and Da Nang, Cam Ranh and Ho Chi Minh City in the south.

In the north there are four distinct climatic seasons: a hot spring, when the temperature varies from 15°C to 22°C, a summer with temperatures averaging 30°C and heavy and constant rainfall, often resulting in extensive floods, a cool autumn with the average temperature of 10-15°C and a winter when dry winds blow from the mountains of the continental north and the temperature sometimes drops to 2°C below zero.

Annual rainfall averages 1,500 mm on the plains, but in the mountains it reaches 2,000-2,300 mm. It is brought by the monsoons, which are also responsible for the rainy season lasting from May to October, in some mountainous areas in the north from August to January.

However, rainfall is in general irregular, producing droughts and floods, which have a negative impact on the country, which depends mainly on agriculture. Every year the country is hit by typhoons.

Brief history: Since times immemorial, the territory of Vietnam has been inhabited by some of its present ethnic groups, such as the Viets and the Mongs, who lived on the western plateau in the south of Trung Bo. Later, in the 4th century B.C., the Thais invaded the country, and seven centuries later the Man Dzao.

The history of Vietnamese man goes back to the Stone Age. As time passed, society gradually divided into clans. Some 5,000 years ago, during the Neolithic era, the Viet people began to settle the plains and used copper and bronze. The main occupations of the population were agriculture and to some extent fishing.

In the history of Vietnam, the Bronze Age coincided with the era of the legendary state of Van Lang, whose Hung dynasty is regarded as a symbol of Vietnamese national identity.

In the 3rd century B.C., a local king, who ruled the territory of the present-day Cao Bang province, moved to the Van Lang area and there founded a state known as Au Lac with three principal clans—the Viets, the Muongs and the Thais.

The formation of the kingdom of Au Lac in 258 B.C. may be regarded as the beginning of the history of the present Vietnamese state, which finds its roots in the legendary kingdom of Van Lang.

Half a century after its founding, the Au Lac territory was conquered by Thieu Da, a vassal of the feudal Chinese Qi dynasty, who also annexed the territory of the present-day Chinese province of Guangdong. Both areas were united and given the name Nam Viet.

In 111 B.C., Nam Viet was conquered by the feudal Han empire. The country was divided into three zones from its northern region Bac Bo to Nghe An and each was ruled by different Chinese feudal dynasties.

A period of struggle and insurrections against foreign rule began that was to last for ten centuries. The feudal foreign domination ended in the year 939 with the victory of Ngo Nguyen on the historical River Bach Dang, which opened a new era for the country.

Throughout the occupation, the Vietnamese people fought against the Chinese invaders. Notable distinction was won by the Trung Sisters, who in the first century A.D. became national heroines and whose name is borne by a mountain range which forms the frontier between Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea in the west.

Vietnamese history in the 10th to 16th centuries is characterized by an endless struggle against foreign aggressors, including the Mongols and the Ming dynasty. Notwithstanding all these tribulations, the people of Vietnam continued building and consolidating their state, which gradually became a centralized feudal realm maintaining busy trade relations with neighbouring Thailand, China and Indonesia.

At the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th century, paper money was already in circulation in Vietnam and such large cities as Dong Do (today's Hanoi), Tay Do (Than Hoa) and the ports of Van Dong (Quang Yen) and Dien Chau (Nghe An) developed.

In the period between the 16th and 19th centuries, the Vietnamese feudal state passed through an acute crisis.

The growing peasant movement clashed with the ruling class, which acted as an obstacle to progress, and this led to a succession of civil wars.

On the other hand, contacts with developing Western capitalism had a profound effect on Vietnam's own development. Industry and commerce rapidly grew and, the first trading centres appeared, doing business mainly with the British, the Portuguese, the French and the Chinese.

At the end of the 19th century, the feudal Nguyen dynasty surrendered Vietnam's national sovereignty to the French. In 1858, the French colonialists penetrated into the northern zone and by 1884 completed the occupation of the country.

The Treaty of Tien-Tsin, forced upon China by the colonial powers on May 11, 1884, was followed by intensive fighting until the signing of a new treaty on June 9, 1885, under which the French protectorate was recognized over Tonkin and Annam, the central and northern parts of Vietnam. Cochinchina in the south had been annexed by France in 1862.

This was the beginning of a long period of struggle against French colonialization, which turned the whole nation into an enormous feudal state ruled by a Governor-General. Administratively, the country was divided into three regions.

In 1887 the protectorates of Annam and Tonkin, together with Cochinchina, were turned by France into an Indochinese Union, to which the colonized territory of Laos was added six years later.

France's main preoccupation in Vietnam was how to intensify the exploitation of its wealth and to complete the domination of the country. The French occupation forces showed especially great interest in the rich agricultural area of Cochinchina.

Their ambitions satisfied, the colonialists settled in that area and stepped up their exploitation of the Mekong delta between 1880 and 1937. This had dire consequences for the local peasants, which spurred an upsurge of subversive activities.

Vast landed estates grew in that period of a size until then unknown in Vietnam. The scale and scope of land exploitation by the colonists replaced the old family farming, giving rise to a new class of farm labourers.

The first Vietnamese intellectuals educated in French-dominated schools emerged, many of them having gained the opportunity of studying at universities in France. The dissemination of French culture in Vietnam in the first half of the 20th century could be compared only with the influence and penetration of Chinese culture in the past. At the same time, new political ideas and new political parties emerged, such as the Communist Party of Indochina, founded by Ho Chi Minh in 1930.

The struggle of the Vietnamese people gained in intensity in the period 1939-1945, first against the French colonialists and then against the Japanese aggressors. The patriots formed the Viet Minh Front in May 1941, on the initiative and under the leadership of the Communist Party of Indochina. A liberation army was formed, and on September 2, 1945, after it had liberated the country from the Japanese, who had found accommodation with the French colonial administration of the Vichy regime under a treaty signed on December 9, 1941, the Provisional Government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was established.

Shortly after its formation, France began preparing for the restoration of the colonial regime, and on September 23, 1945, French military forces, with the support of British troops who were there to disarm the Japanese, launched an aggressive war against the fledgling Vietnamese state. At the same time, forces of the reactionary government of Chiang Kai-shek entered northern Vietnam under the same pretext of disarming the Japanese.

The war against the French, who were supported by their British allies, lasted until May 1954, when the last enemy troops were routed in the historical battle of Dien Bien Phu, in spite of U.S. military assistance. The government in Paris was then forced to sign the Geneva Agreement on restoration of peace in Indochina on July 20, 1954.

The final declaration of the Geneva conference recognized the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea (then Cambodia). However, those accords were broken by the United States and its allies.

Under the cease-fire terms, the French troops would concentrate in the south of the country until their evacuation was completed, while the People's Army of Vietnam would be concentrated north of the 17th parallel, which was set as the provisional demarcation line between the two parts of the country until the reunification of the whole nation following elections to be held in 1956.

Inspired by the United States, the local pro-French government, headed by Ngo Dinh Diem, proclaimed a Republic of Vietnam with a capital in Saigon (today's Ho Chi Minh City) on the territory south of the 17th parallel and refused to hold the elections stipulated by the Geneva Agreements.

A guerilla movement emerged in the south against the U.S. imperialists, who had replaced the French, and against their local allies, and the People's National Liberation Army was formed.

A Front of National Liberation was founded on December 20, 1960, with the objective of rallying all patriotic forces and of co-ordinating their efforts in the struggle. Subsequently, a Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam was formed.

In 1964 the war in South Vietnam acquired the character of an open confrontation between the U.S. occupation troops and the patriotic forces. In August of the same year the United States extended the hostilities to the Democratic Republic of Vietnam north of the 17th parallel by the bombing of many localities.

In 1965, the United States initiated a new military strategy of a "local war" with the massive introduction of its troops in South Vietnam. By the middle of 1967, the number of these troops passed the half-million mark, while the troops sent by its allies, South Korea, Australia and others numbered 100,000.

In 1969 yet another strategy—that of "Vietnamization"—was devised by the United States, which organized a 1,000,000 strong South Vietnamese army, which it equipped and financed.

On September 3, 1969, President Ho Chi Minh died and his political testament urged the Vietnamese people to continue the struggle and to strengthen the unity and cohesion of the Party and the people.

All the attempts by the United States to secure its domination of Vietnam failed, including the massive bombing of the northern cities, mainly Hanoi and Haiphong, in the latter half of December 1972, while negotiations to end the war in Vietnam were under way in Paris. In the same year U.S. President Richard Nixon was received in Peking.

Thousands of people were killed and wounded by the bombings in less than two weeks. The American objective was to conduct the talks in Paris from a position of strength, but the U.S. Air Force lost so many planes and pilots that it did not recover from the losses until the end of hostilities.

In spite of the expansion of its aggression, which had turned Vietnam into an experimental field for new forms of warfare and use of new weapons, the United States was forced to sign an agreement to end the war and restore peace in Vietnam in Paris on January 27, 1973.

The agreement provided for an end of the conflict on the basis of "respect of the fundamental national rights of the Vietnamese people and the right of self-determination of the South Vietnamese population in order to contribute to the consolidation of peace in Asia and in the world in general".

However, the official signing of the agreement did not bring peace to Vietnam. Somewhat later, a 1,000,000-strong army of the Saigon regime, led by 25,000 U.S. officers and military advisers, launched new offensive operations against territory controlled by the patriotic forces, thereby violating the Paris Agreement.

Under these conditions, the revolutionary leadership first resisted these attacks and then—China's disapproval notwithstanding—launched a large-scale offensive of its armed forces, which together with the simultaneous uprising in South Vietnam's urban and rural areas led to the liberation of the entire south of the country. On April 30, 1975, Saigon was liberated.

In November of the same year, a political consultative conference met in Ho Chi Minh City, the name proposed for Saigon, of delegates from the north and the south to discuss re-unification of Vietnam as a single state. The conference agreed to hold elections for a National Assembly on April 25, 1976.

That supreme body of state power gave final approval for the unification of the country, chose its capital and its national anthem, and elected the executive bodies and their heads. It also set up a commission which would draw up a new constitution.

On July 2, 1976, the National Assembly decided to name the country the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

In December 1976 another important event took place—the Fourth Congress of the Vietnamese Workers' Party, which re-adopted the name Communist and set the political and economic lines of the nation's development in the period of reconstruction.

However, December 31, 1977, marked a new stage in the history of the peoples of Indochina, who had fought together for their independence. On that day, the Kampuchean authorities, headed by Pol Pot, issued in Phnom Penh and Peking an official document accusing Vietnam of certain border incidents. At the same time diplomatic relations between the two countries were broken off.

The Vietnamese authorities immediately answered the Kampuchean allegations and in this and all subsequent statements constantly reiterated their readiness to settle any conflict by negotiation in order not to upset the friendship between the two peoples.

Later, it bcame known that on May 5, 1975, after the liberation of South Vietnam, Kampuchean soldiers staged the first border incident when they occupied the Vietnamese island of Tho Chu and later engaged in many other provocations.

As Vietnam had to wage an actual war against Kampuchean troops invading its western frontier areas, on June 10, 1978, China cancelled her aid to Vietnam. This economic move was accompanied by armed provocations in the north with the aim of further aggravating the situation and of opening a second front against the Vietnamese forces.

In the second half of 1978, the People's Army of Vietnam dealt serious blows to both aggressors, and in retaliation Peking stepped up its pressure by closing three Vietnamese consulates in China, completely cutting off all economic aid, closing its railway link with Vietnam at the end of the year (Vietnam's sole overland international line of communication), and by raising unreasonable demands that Vietnam's socialization measures should not be applied to Vietnamese citizens of Chinese ethnic origin (the Hoa).

In escalating its pressure on the neighbouring country, China complained that Vietnam was persecuting those elements, but the Foreign Ministry in Hanoi denounced all these machinations on May 28, 1978, and disclosed Peking's hand.

Without any previous consultations with Hanoi, China announced that she would send three ships to evacuate the Hoa, many of whom were well-to-do and even wealthy merchants from the Chinese quarter of Cholon in Ho Chi Minh City. Vietnam refused to accept this breach of its sovereignty, pointing out that this was a Chinese scheme to present the problem as a Vietnamese provocation. Eventually, thousands of Vietnamese of Hoa origin left the country under orderly and disciplined conditions arranged by the Vietnamese authorities in the full exercise of their country's sovereignty.

At the same time, the incidents with China grew in number and intensity along the frontier between the two countries until an open war broke out on February 17, 1979, when Chinese troops invaded Vietnamese territory.

A month later, after having suffered a number of defeats in which they lost 62,500 men—one-tenth of the deployed forces—and large quantities of arms and equipment, and after having committed many crimes in the areas they had occupied, the invaders were driven out by the regional Vietnamese troops.

At Vietnam's request, talks opened in Hanoi on April 18, 1979, which soon became deadlocked because of Peking's intransigence. Nevertheless, Vietnam sent a delegation to attend a second round of the negotiations in the Chinese capital in June, but those talks once again failed to produce any result. Since then, the Chinese have shown reluctance to hold a third round, proposed by Vietnam under the principle that the many bilateral differences should be settled round the conference table rather than with guns.

The violence of the Chinese campaign and aggression against Vietnam had reached such an extent that some friendly countries decided to create once again solidarity committees, while opposition grew throughout the world against the war launched by Peking, which did not cease with the withdrawal of the bulk of its forces from Vietnam in March 1979.

After that withdrawal, Chinese units continued to hold more than ten positions on Vietnamese territory and persisted in their bombardment, infiltrations and other provocations in order to prevent the Vietnamese people from devoting themselves to the peaceful socialist construction of their country.

Some other countries are involved in these machinations, such as the members of the Association of South-east Asian Nations—ASEAN—which is made up of Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia,and Indonesia.

In February 1980 Vietnam proposed a meeting between the countries of Indochina (Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea) and the ASEAN members in order to settle the problems that cause tension in this region. However, its proposal was ignored. A conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea, held in Ho Chi Minh City in January 1981, reiterated the proposal, adding that each one of them was prepared to sign bilateral treaties with Peking on the peaceful solution of the diferences which contribute to the destabilized situation in South-east Asia.

In the meantime, the Vietnamese people continue pursuing the task set by their late President Ho Chi Minh in "building a homeland ten times more beautiful" after their liberation.

In May 1979 the fifth session of the National Assembly adopted two resolutions which underlined the great victory scored in the two wars—against the American aggression and against the Chinese invasion—and which provided for the creation of a special zone with the character of a province, for the purpose of prospecting for the exploiting of natural gas and petroleum resources.

At its sixth session, held in January 1980, the National Assembly decided to extend its term of office until the promulgation of the new constitution. Moreover, it discussed the government's development plan, which provided for a 4.7% growth of industrial production compared with 1979, and for the enrolment of 30,000 students in universities and of 450,000 students at secondary schools. The Assembly also adopted a national budget of 22,000,900,000 dongs (the rate of exchange is 2.52 dongs per U.S. dollar), as well as other production and social tasks.

At its session in December 1980 the National Assembly promulgated a new constitution, the third one in Vietnam's history and the first one after re-unification, as well as an electoral law. It also issued a report on the implementation of the development plan and the 1981 budget.

The new constitution, which replaces the 1959 constitution, which, in turn, had replaced a 1946 fundamental law, had been discussed since 1978 by more than 20,000,000 Vietnamese citizens. It establishes a State Council, while the National Assembly retains its position as the supreme body of state power.

The constitution, approved by the seventh session of the National Assembly, consists of a preamble, 12 chapters and 147 articles. The electoral law, passed at the same time, decrees universal suffrage with the right to vote of all citizens over 18, irrespective of their sex. The holding of the next elections was set for April 1981.

In the fields of science and technology, 1980 was a great year for Vietnam due to its membership in the socialist community. On July 23 of that year, the Soyuz 37 spaceship was launched from the Baikonur cosmodrome in the Soviet Union within the framework of the Intercosmos programme. On board were Col. Viktor Gorbatko, the ship's commander, and the Vietnamese colonel Pham Tuan as researcher. This sixth Intercosmos manned space flight was the first one involving a Vietnamese cosmonaut and the first cosmonaut from the so-called Third World. It was also the first time that a man from a member-country of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries flew into space. The crew of Soyuz 37 returned to Earth on July 31, 1980.

The Socialist Republic Vietnam has been a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries since 1976. At the 32nd session of the U.N. General Assembly it was admitted to the world organization on September 21, 1977. Vietnam became the 149th member of the United Nations, despite the fact that for two years the United States had exercised its power of veto in the Security Council to prevent Vietnam from asserting its right to participate in the work of the supreme international organization.

On June 29, 1978, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was admitted as full member of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

At the non-aligned foreign ministers' conference held in New Delhi in February 1981 the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, Nguyen Co Thac, declared that his country would continue providing the military assistance requested by the government of Kampuchea as long as the external threat to that Indochinese country persisted.

Economy: Vietnamese economy is agrarian in character. Agricultural production used 14.5% of Vietnam's territory, 41.5% of which is covered by forests. Other land is being recovered after having been seriously damaged by the chemical and bacteriological warfare waged by the United States.

At its seventh session in December 1980, the National Assembly outlined the general features of the state plan for 1981. It reported that 57.7% of the national economy is developing along socialist lines and accounts for 37.7% of the gross national product. It also reported that 53.4% of the value of production comes from the north, the former Democratic Republic of Vietnam, while in the south, liberated in 1976, the process of collectivization is currently in full swing.

As reported by parliament, 70% of Vietnam's population is employed in agricultural production.

For 1981, the plan envisages the production of 15,000,000 metric tons of cereals, mainly rice, and a 2.3% growth of industrial output, 18% increase in the production of consumer articles, 6% growth of power production, 10% increase of coal and chemical production, and a 67% increase of production of building materials.

Under the second five-year plan, which began in 1981, agricultural production should grow by 18.7% and industrial production by 17.3%, both compared with 1975, when the first such plan was initiated.

In 1980 the Socialist Republic of Vietnam had undertaken to build one and a half million square metres of housing.

In the same year Vietnam's national budget amounted to 22,000,900,000 dongs. Vietnam must accomplish these targets while at the same time facing natural disasters and foreign aggression. To this must be added the large-scale devastation caused by the two wars fought since 1964, which resulted in loss of production in various branches of agriculture.

Vietnamese agriculture produces 1,300,000 metric tons of sweet potatoes (sixth place in the world), 30,000 tons of beans, 113,000 tons of onions, 2,000,000 tons of castor-oil plant, 23,000 tons of copra, 97,000 tons of peanuts, 36,000 tons of soya beans, 13,000 tons of tobacco, and 26,000 tons of jute.

Other important products include 35,000 tons of rubber, sorghum, fresh-water and sea fish, an important component of the Vietnamese diet together with rice. Completing the list of agricultural products are cotton, bananas, coffee, citrus fruit, maize, millet, potatoes, sugar cane and fruit.

Vietnam also produces 520,000 sq. m of timber.

Vietnam is a mineral-rich country, but, with the exception of coal mined at Hong Gai in the north, deposits of iron, tin, lead, zinc, manganese, chromium, tungsten, asbestos and other ores and minerals are insufficiently exploited, due to the war and the necessity to devote the existing resources to the reconstruction of the economic infrastructure and to acceleration of agricultural production.

Thus, work is concentrated on the reconstruction of the cement, steel, textile and electric power production capacities, on rebuilding livestock production, the fishing fleet and the network of irrigation canals—both repair of the old ones and construction of new canals.

The five-year plan for the period 1976-1980 provided for the production of 3,500,000,000 eggs, 1,000,000 tons of meat, 1,000,000 tons of fish, 16,500,000 pigs, 10,000,000 tons of coal, 5,000,000,000 kWh of electricity, 2,000,000 tons of cement, 1,000,000 tons of fertilizers, and 450,000,000 m of fabrics, as well as 13,000 tons of paper, 220,000 to 250,000 tons of sugar, the improvement of 1,000,000 hectares of land and reafforestation of 1,200,000 hectares.

In order to achieve these goals, Vietnam has relied on the socialist community, primarily the assistance of the Soviet Union which gave it on July 17, 1980, its first satellite telecommunication ground station. Moreover, in the two years up to 1978, the Soviet Union completed 23 major projects out of a total of 254 that it will build at its own cost, including a hydro-electric plant on the Da River, which will be the largest such plant in Southeast Asia, with the capacity of 1,700,000 kV, another such plant at Pha Li with the capacity of 500 mgV, coal mines at He Tam, reconstruction of the Haiphong port, Vietnam's most important,and other projects.

Vietnam's economically active population is estimated at more than 25,000,000 people.

The country's communication network includes 4,097 km of railway lines, 72,945 km of roads, and 4,500 km of canals. More than 35 daily newspapers are published, among them Nhan Dan, the press organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam, whose daily edition has been 1,000,000 copies since December 7, 1978. There are also several national radio and television stations.

The official news agency VNA was founded on September 16, 1945, during the struggle against French colonialism and Japanese militarism.

Government: On July 2, 1976, the National Assembly defined the Socialist Republic of Vietnam as a state of the dictatorship of the proletariat, based on the alliance of workers and peasants under the leadership of the working class. Power is exercised by the people through the National Assembly and People's Councils. The National Assembly is the supreme body of state power and the sole legislative authority. Its duties include election of the President and the Vice-President of the Republic and other members of the Council of Ministers. It adopts the national economic development plans, examines and approves the national budget, and decides on matters of peace and war. It holds its sessions twice a year and is elected for a term of four years.

The President of the Republic is elected for a term of four years. He represents the country internally and externally. He is the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and president of the National Defence Council.

Vietnam reorganized its cabinet twice in the last months of 1980 in order to place in the respective top posts men of high technical and professional quality essential for the realization of the country's current tasks.

In April 1980 the President of the Republic, Ton Duc Thang, died and his office was assumed for an interim period by Vice-President Nguyen Huu Tho.

At its sixth session, in January 1980, the National Assembly extended its mandate until the promulgation of a new constitution and discussed the results of the state plan and the main lines of development in 1980 and 1981.

On December 18, 1980, the National Assembly enacted Vietnam's third constitution, the first following the nation's reunification and its proclamation as a socialist state. This supreme law of the country, which had been discussed by more than 20,000,000 citizens since 1978, was signed the next day. It provides for 2,547 members of the National Assembly, and it also established a State Council.

Vietnam's previous constitutions were enacted in 1946 and 1959.

The same session also enacted an electoral law establishing universal suffrage and a secret ballot for all citizens having legal capacity and older than 18 years. The only persons denied the right to vote are individuals serving prison terms and mentally incapacitated individuals.

General elections were held in April 1981, as decided by the National Assembly at its seventh session, which also reviewed a report on the implementation of the state plan in 1980 and on the 1981 national budget.

The economic part of this parliamentary session was of major importance, because in 1981 began Vietnam's second five-year plan, which runs until 1985 and which must be implemented in a climate of adversity and hostility on the part of China, the United States and other countries allied with those two powers.

The Council of State, established at the seventh session of the National Assembly, replaced its Standing Committee as an executive body. The tasks of the Standing Committee of the National Assembly included the convening and organization of parliamentary elections, the convening of parliamentary sessions,, interpretation of the laws and issuing of decrees, supervision of the work of the Government Council, the People's Supreme Court and the People's Supreme Tribunal, among other duties.

Armed forces: Vietnam's Armed forces, known as the People's Army, include ground, naval and air forces organized and equipped so as to wage a modern war.

Their most important feature is their capacity to put in arms millions of combatants from the reserves which form their part; in practice, this means almost every Vietnamese citizen older than 16 years.

The Vietnamese armed forces were established on December 21, 1944, to fight Japanese militarism, which they defeated. Subsequently, they also defeated French colonialism in the battle of Dien Bien Phu in 1953.

However, even after its great victories the Vietnamese People's Army could not rest. In 1975, after 11 years of battle it defeated the military might of the United States, although the latter had employed everything to prevail, including more than 500,000 troops, its deadliest aircraft and the most modern ships of its naval forces.

Later on, the Vietnamese People's Army repelled—without employing its regular units —more than 600,000 Chinese troops, who had invaded the country in the north.

All these battles fought by the armed forces created by the Communist Party on the initiative of the late President Ho Chi Minh, were won under the command of the genius of strategy, General Vo Nguyen Giap, one of the most brilliant military minds of the 20th century.

In February 1980 General Giap was appointed Vice-Premier in charge of science and technology, serving at the same time as member of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

The most important tasks of Vietnam's armed forces continue to be at present the defence of the country's national sovereignty—especially against Chinese aggression—and also assistance in the economic development of Vietnam and in raising the standard of living of its population.

Organizations: The most important organization is the Communist Party of Vietnam, the leading political party in the country, founded half a century ago, on February 3, 1931, by Ho Chi Minh. At that time it was called the Communist Party of Indochina, with the objective of liberating Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea from French colonial domination.

Later it was renamed the Workers' Party of Vietnam and worked under this name until its Fourth Congress in December 1976, held after the reunification of the country to adjust its organization so as to meet the new tasks that had arisen.

There are also two minor parties—the Socialist Party and the Democratic Party—both of which held their last, fourth, congresses in December and June 1979 respectively. The

Socialist Party was founded in 1946 and the Democratic Party in 1944 for the purpose of associating the patriotic elements of the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie and to organize them for the struggle against French colonialism.

The Trade Union Federation of Vietnam, another important organization, was formed in 1946 and is a member of the World Federation of Trade Unions since 1949.

There is also the Ho Chi Minh Communist Youth Union, formerly known as the Working Youth Union, formed in the same year as the Communist Party. It held its Fourth Congress in November 1980.

Yet another large, nationwide organization is the Vietnamese Women's Union. In March 1980, it reported a membership of 5,800,000.

A characteristic feature of the Vietnamese leaders is their capacity to organize people both in the north and the south of the country. At the time of reunification and the founding of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976, dozens of youth, women's and trade union organizations existed in the common fronts fighting the United States aggressors and their local helpers.

In the south, these organizations were members of the National Front of Liberation, which dissolved after the reunification.

In the north, all organizations were integrated in the Patriotic Front of Vietnam, which is the largest organization in the whole country. The Patriotic Front held its Fourth Plenary Session in February 1979, which was presided over by Le Duan, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam.

A Federation of Vietnamese Farmers was founded in September 1979 as an organization which is to play a major role in spurring agricultural production, which provides work for 70% of the population and is a key factor in the economic progress of the country.

Culture, education and sport: Vietnamese culture has a rich and long tradition manifested in a great variety of artistic and literary expression, such as the theatre, poetry, fairy-tales, novels, painting, graphics, sculpture, architecture, handicrafts shaping sea shells and lacquer objects, incrustation (with very specific and very old local features projecting into universal forms) and cinematography, which was a powerful weapon of struggle and education during the war and today is concerned with the contemporary problems of the country.

An example of Vietnamese artistic expression is the "Cheo" theatre and handicrafts. "Cheo" is a kind of didactic and morality musical play in both its traditional and modern forms, with many humorous situations but with the objective of setting rules of civic behaviour. Although it originated many centuries ago, it draws thousands of people to this day.

The typical handicrafts are functional and are marked by fine taste. Their best-known products include mats, carpets, woven cloth, bamboo articles, items made of jute or wool, baskets, hats, boxes, plates, jugs and pottery, bamboo jugs, and many other items. In general, bamboo is a widely used material for producing many handicraft articles, since it is available in large quantities all over the country. Incrustation of sea shells and nacre on wood or bamboo covered with a special lacquer of local origin is one of the unique characteristic features of Vietnamese handicraft.

Generally speaking, Vietnam had eradicated illiteracy by 1978. There is a small number of illiterate people among the ethnic nomadic groups living in the mountains in the south of the country. These groups are being persuaded to settle down in order to improve their living conditions. About 1,600,000 illiterates existed in the south at the time the revolution prevailed in Vietnam.

Education is free and compulsory in Vietnam. In the school year of 1976, the first one after reunification and with a common, nationwide system of education, there were 20,000 schools with 300,000 teachers providing instruction to 12,000,000 pupils. In 1978, this number rose to 13,000,000.

Beginning with the 1977-1978 school year, an educational reform was put into effect in order to raise the scientific and technical standard of education at all types of schools. One of the main features of Vietnamese education—in secondary schools in particular—is a combination of theoretical studies with practical instruction and other manual work—a system known as "study-work schools". These schools have as their basic objective the shaping of citizens who are in harmony with socialist society.

Thousands of young Vietnamese have been studying at universities in the socialist countries since the years of the war.

In 1981 the establishment of Educational Councils was announced, as well as the introduction of nine-year schools as the first step towards their subsequent extension—when the circumstances permit it—to 11 years within the framework of a general educational reform.

Vietnamese sport made its debut in the international Olympic movement at the 22nd Summer Olympic Games in Moscow in July and August 1980.

The most popular and most frequently practised sport in Vietnam is football. Also popular are basketball, volleyball, table tennis, shooting, running and swimming, in which national sports championships are held every year. Also popular are cycling and traditional local wrestling.

Public health: By the end of 1975, the Vietnamese public health system included 1,637 hospitals, clinics and rehabilitation centres, and 10,460 medical centres and maternity wards in villages. The system is served by more than 35,000 doctors and auxiliary workers, close to 6,000 pharmacists of medium and university levels, as well as other technical and auxiliary staff amounting to 120,000 persons.

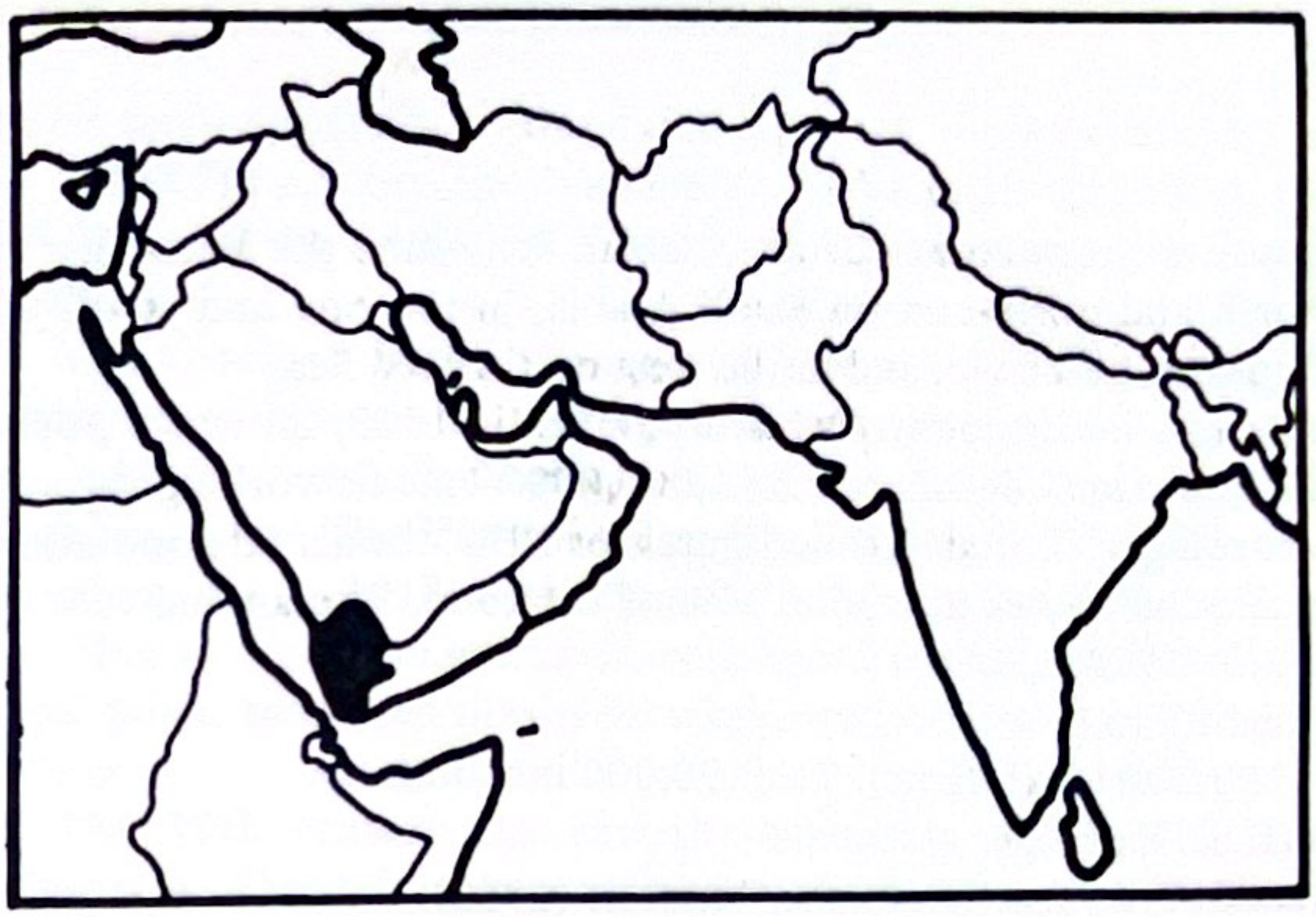
These figures have grown especially after reunification because the country could spend much of the sum earlier used for military purposes on public health. However, the 1979 Chinese aggression once again forced the country to lay stress on the development of its armed forces.

In the field of public health, as in all its national efforts, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam receives considerable aid from the socialist community and enjoys the benefits arising from its membership—since 1978—of the CMEA.

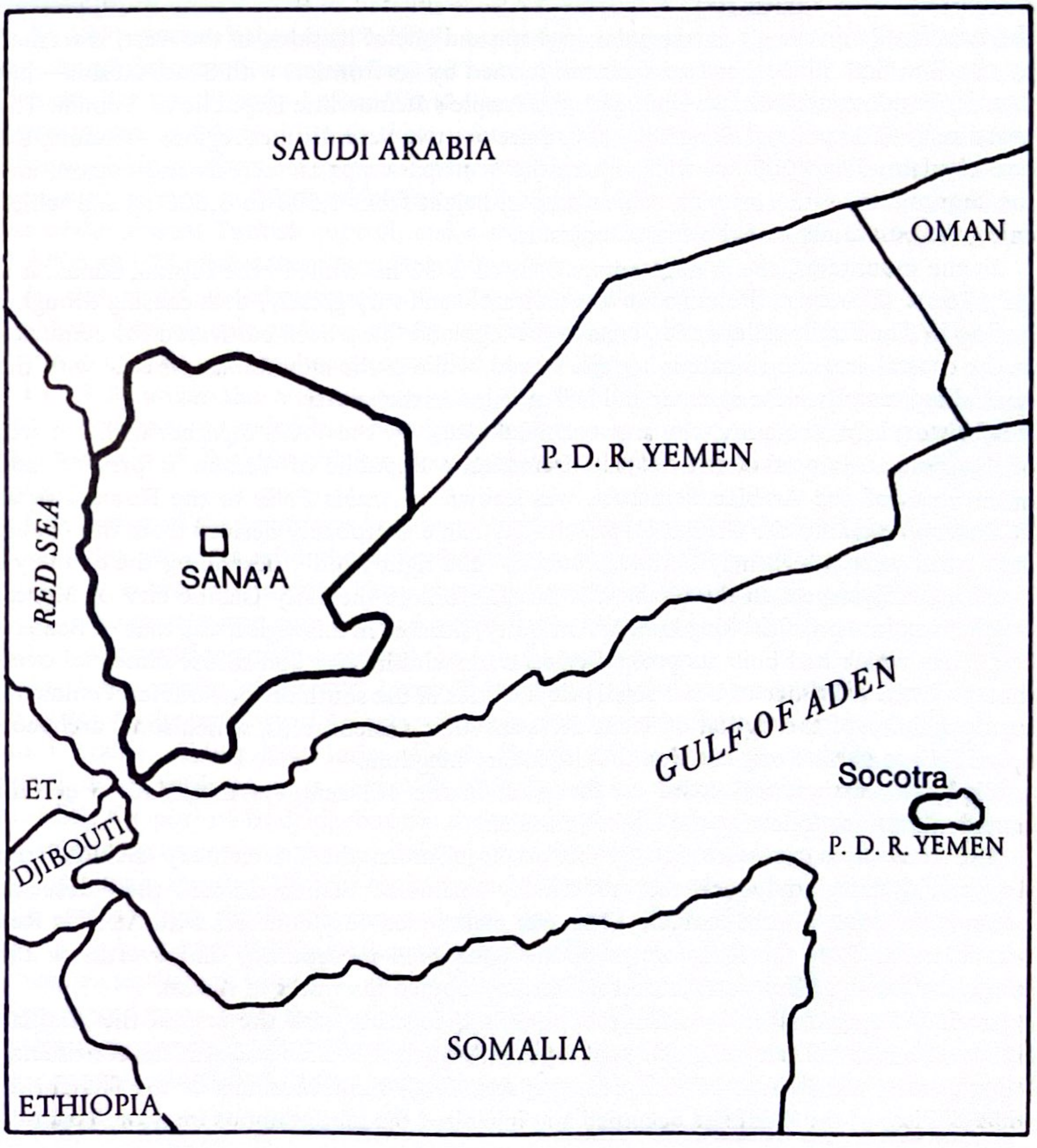
Religion: There is separation of the church from the state in Vietnam, although there is full religious freedom, as confirmed on November 28, 1980, by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Ho Chi Minh City.

The traditional and most widespread religion is Buddhism in all its shades and manifestations.

It is estimated that the Roman Catholic population exceeds 2,000,000 people, concentrated mostly in the south—particularly in Ho Chi Minh City and other large urban centres—but the number of truly practising Catholics is much smaller.



YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC


SAUDI ARABIA
OMAN
P. D. R. YEMEN
RED SEA
SANA'A
GULF OF ADEN
Socotra
P. D. R. YEMEN
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DJIBOUTI
SOMALIA
ETHIOPIA

Official name: The Yemen Arab Republic.
Area: 195,000 sq.km.
Borders: Situated in the south-western corner of the Arabian Peninsula, the Yemen Arab Republic borders in the north and north-east on Saudi Arabia, in the east and south on the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and in the west on the Red Sea.
Population: The first-ever census in the country's history, taken in 1975, showed a population of 6,400,000, but this figure included more than 1,000,000 Yemenis working abroad, mostly in Saudi Arabia. According to United Nations figures for 1979, the actual population was 5,790,000. Urban population makes up about 10% of the total. The annual rate of population growth was 2.2% in 1978.
Capital: Sanaa (175,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Hodeida (100,000 inhabitants), Taiz (90,000 inhabitants).
Languages: Arabic is the official language.
Public holidays: September 26, Proclamation of the Republic (1962).
Geography: The Yemen Arab Republic—YAR—is situated in the extreme south-west of the Arabian Peninsula. It is triangular in shape and one of its sides, in the west, is washed by the Red Sea. The other two sides are formed by its frontiers with Saudi Arabia—that frontier is not exactly drawn—and with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen. The coastline is 450 km long. Geographically, there are two very distinct regions—Tihama, the coastal plain, 50 to 100 km wide, where the principal crops are cereals and cotton, and the mountains of the interior, which vary in height from 1,500 to 3,600 m and which enjoy the best climate of the entire Peninsula.

In the mountains, the average annual rainfall is 32 in. while in the capital, Sanaa, it is only 16 in. However, the rains are unpredicatble and vary greatly, thus causing droughts or floods. The fertile valleys and plains in the highlands have been cultivated for centuries. In the coastal area the climate is hot and humid, while in the mountains it is cool with the rain falling mostly in the summer and hail or snow in the winter.

Brief history: In Antiquity, the area occupied today by the YAR, together with the area of Hadramaut—a part of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen at present—and other parts of the Arabian Peninsula, was known as *Arabia Felix* to the Romans or as *Eudaimon Arabia* to the Greeks. Its present-day name is probably derived from the Arabic root word *ymn,* which may be interpreted as "the right hand", describing the country's location with respect to the Kaaba, the sacred stone in the Holy Islamic city of Mecca.

The best known of the kingdoms of Antiquity, situated in this region was that of Saaba—or Sheba—which had built its prosperity on trade with incense and whose fame had overshadowed the existence of other small principalities in the south of the Arabian Peninsula. In the vicinity of the capital of Sanaa there are some ancient ruins, which some archaeologists believe to have originated in that legendary kingdom.

Christian missionaries settled on the coast in the 4th century A.D., due to certain Jewish migrations following the fall of Jerusalem.

The early dynasties recorded by historians prior to the 6th century included the Himyarit dynasty, to which the modern-day Imams of Yemen claimed their descent.

Since the most distant antiquity, the area maintained busy contacts with Africa's Red Sea coast. In 525, the Kingdom of Axum conquered the country and overthrew the Himyarit dynasty. Fifty years later, the Persians toppled the rulers of Axum.

In 628 Yemen fell under Islamic domination, together with the rest of the Arabian Peninsula, as the militant religion swept rapidly through the Asian and African continents. Subsequently, the Tihama coastal plain was settled by Sunni Moslems of the Shaffi rite, while Shi'ites of the Zaidi rite occupied and inhabited the mountainous interior. This religious division persists to this day.

In the 9th century, the Zaidi Imam, Yahya Al Hadi al Haqq, founded the Rassid dynasty, which ruled the country with only a few brief interruptions until the establishment of the Republic.

The Ottoman Empire conquered Yemen in 1517. Sultan Selim I succeeded in firmly establishing his rule in the region despite strong European competition; it was in that period when European navigators and merchants began to use the sailing route from the Cape to India. The Yemeni tribes rebelled on a number of occasions against the Ottoman invaders and in 1818, with Egyptian help, the Zaidi Imams re-established their authority in Tihama. Egyptian garrisons were based in Hodeida and Mocca, the country's two principal ports, but when they were withdrawn in 1840, the Turks once again re-asserted their power.

The 19th century also saw the expansion of the Wahabis from the interior of the Peninsula. Throughout recent history, the Wahabis have had territorial disputes of varying intensity with the Yemenis.

In 1905. Imam Yahya (1904-1948) headed a general revolt against the Ottoman rule and for a brief period occupied Sanaa. The rebellion was crushed and the Turks continued to hold Yemen. Shortly before World War I, they clashed with British troops from the Protectorate of Aden, although there existed an Anglo-Turkish frontier arbitration commission. This confrontation ended with the signing of a new treaty between the two occupying powers in 1914, which arbitrarily divided Yemen—into a northern part, which was under formal Turkish control, and a southern zone which included the Protectorate of Aden and 23 mini-states under British tutelage.

In the north an administative division was established with the coastal area under complete Turkish rule and the mountainous interior, which was more difficult to govern for the occupying power, being controlled by the Imam.

In 1918, under the Mudros Armistice, the Turks had to abandon the territory they held. The Imam extended his sovereignty to the coast and established his autocratic rule with the help of Turkish officials who agreed to assist him in running and controlling the country.

The power of the Imam was based on Yemen's tribal structure. He established a number of complex alliances with the different tribes and used bribery and coercion as normal means for achieving his ends. Throughout the period of the imamate, which lasted until 1962, the country was completely isolated from the outside world and was characterized by fierce opposition to any economic and social progress.

At the beginning of his rule, Imam Yahya also had differences with the Saudi rulers. His claims to the territory of Asir placed him in conflict with Great Britain and her protege, Saudi Arabia. Aiding King Idrisi of Asir, British troops occupied Hodeida in 1919 and stayed there until the next year. Yahya confirmed his authority over the coastal plain, including the port of Hodeida, but the superior Saudi military power forced him to accept a Saudi protectorate over the remaining part of the territory of Asir.

The Saudis invaded Yemeni territory in 1934 and imposed on the Imam the Treaty of Taif, under which the Saudis annexed Assir and parts of the Najran region. In the same year, with his power greatly weakened, the Imam had to accept under the Treaty of Sanaa a frontier settlement imposed on him by the British. The frontiers slightly differed from those agreed upon with the Turks at the end of World War I and officially confirmed the British presence in the Protectorate of Aden. The Sanaa Treaty thus sealed the division of the country, which had in fact been created when the British arrived in the southern part of Yemen.

In 1928 the northern part of Yemen concluded a treaty of friendship and commerce with the recently formed Soviet Union.

In 1945 Yemen joined the Arab League and in 1947 was admitted to the United Nations. The next year Yahya was assassinated and Abdullah al-Wazzir was proclaimed Imam. However, his rule lasted only a few days since he was overthrown by the Crown Prince, Saif al-Islam al-Ahmad, who assumed the throne. The prince ruled for 14 years, during which period he executed six of his brothers and 23 governors and ministers. The situation in the country was characterized by poverty and oppression, there were no schools or roads, and public services were totally non-existent.

In 1950 Ahmad concluded with the British a treaty establishing diplomatic relations for the first time between the two countries. In 1956 he concluded a mutual defence agreement with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, thereby trying to contain British influence in the Peninsula. Two years later he formed an ephemeral Union of Arab States with Egypt and Syria. In 1959 he permitted the establishment of a United States mission in Sanaa.

In the same year, during a brief absence of the Imam, his son, Al Badr, introduced some mild reforms called for by different forces within the oppressed society of North Yemen. However, on his return Ahmad abolished these reforms as well as some subsidies paid to the most powerful tribes. This produced a wave of armed clashes in the country, which the Imam suppressed. From then on, the opposition to the imamate included progressives opposed to the mediaeval royal regime as well as, at the other extreme of the political spectrum, conservative forces which disputed the absolute rule of the royal family.

Imam Ahmad died in September 1962 and was succeeded by his son and heir to the thrown, Mohammad al-Badr, who was deposed a week later by a revolutionary movement led by Colonel Abdullah al-Sallal. Col. Sallal proclaimed a republic and fought for the installation of a progressive system that would bring the country into the community of modern nations. After the adoption of a republican constitution, the new government permitted the return of emigres, put into effect an agrarian reform and organized state farms on land confiscated from the Imam. Peasants associated in cooperatives, where they received grain, fertilizers and farming machinery. For the first time in history, Yemeni farmers possessed mechanization to work the soil in place of the old hand implements. Construction also began of the first industrial enterprises.

From its very beginning the young republic had to cope with poverty, backwardness and lack of development which the whole country had inherited from the Imams. Sallal had to fight the Imam's supporters, who had found refuge in Saudi Arabia and who began to attack the new Yemeni government in the frontier areas. Royalist elements concentrated in the mountains in the north-east of the country also attacked the republican forces. In the meantime, the Yemen Arab Republic was recognized by Egypt, Syria, Iraq and a number of socialist countries.

The Imam's supporters relied in their attacks against the republic on Saudi and Jordanian assistance and on an active British involvement. Under these circumstances Sallal asked President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt for assistance, and the Egyptians helped the young republic wage a war which lasted for eight years.

In 1962 more than 50 countries recognized the YAR, which took in the United Nations the seat vacated by the Imam's regime. The following year the world organization succeeded in reaching a compromise with Saudi Arabia, which promised to withdraw its support to the Yemeni tribes, and a mission of 200 men was sent to Sanaa to supervise the implementation of the agreement, which the Saudis eventually ignored. The U.N. mission therefore had to leave in September 1964.

In that year the presence was discovered of mercenaries in the ranks of the royalist forces. They were mostly French and British.

A new attempt to mediate a settlement of the conflict was made in October 1964, this time in Erkhawit, Sudan. The republicans and monarchists studied a set of cease-fire terms, but the negotiations again failed.

In August 1965 the heads of state of the United Arab Republic and of Saudi Arabia met in Jidda, in Saudi Arabia, and agreed on bringing the war in the Yemen Arab Republic to an end. They also agreed that the Yemeni people would express their will in a referendum from which would emerge the definite form of their government.

The monarchists tried on various occasions to break off the negotiations for the establishment of peace in the country, making obvious Britain's support of their intentions.

The 1967 Arab-Israeli war forced the withdrawal of the Egyptian troops from the YAR and in the same year Sallal was forced to resign in favour of Abdul Rahman al-Iriani. A rightist government was installed, which gradually abandoned key positions in the country's governmental structure to conservatives. Since then, the subsequent governments have been always headed by republican elements of different political trends, which had to face the great Saudi influence on the country, exercised through financial subsidies to the powerful tribes and opposed to reunification of the Yemeni nation, which is the patriotic objective in both parts of Yemen.

The monarchist forces tried soon after Sallal's overthrow to seize Sanaa, but the republic resisted the new onslaught with the help of other Arab countries, including Syria. The traditional rivalries between the Zaidis and the Shaffis were increasingly exploited in that period in order to provoke a split in the republican ranks.

The Republican Council resigned in March 1969 in order to facilitate the election of a new government, which was headed by Moshen al-Aini. A National Assembly was also constituted.

Certain that the republic no longer posed a threat to its plans to dominate the area, Saudi Arabia officially recognized the regime in Sanaa in 1970, and was quickly followed in this respect by France, Great Britain and Iran.

On September 26, 1972, the tension created between the two parts of the Yemeni nation after the overthrow of Marshal Abdullah al-Sallal finally erupted into a real war brought about by an aggression from the north against South Yemen.

This confrontation was preceded by assistance provided by the government in Sanaa to forces inimical to the southern part of the Yemeni nation, who had found in the North Yemeni capital a virtual base for their operations against Aden, to which were added hostile actions by tribes closest to Saudi Arabia and, on some occasions, direct Saudi hostilities against the revolutionaries in power in the southern part of Yemen.

Four days after the outbreak of the war, the Arab League set up a commission formed by Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Syria and Kuwait, and chaired by the Assistant Secretary-General of the pan-Arab organization, Selim Al Yafi, which after some unsuccessful attempts eventually brought about a cease-fire and cessation of the hostilities in October 1972. Negotiations began in Cairo in the same month between representatives of the two Yemeni states. On October 28, their Prime Ministers, Ali Nasser Mohammed from the south, and Mohsem al-Aini from the north, concluded an agreement in principle on re-unification of their countries.

A month later, an agreement was signed in Tripoli, Libya, which provided for the merger of the two states and which confirmed the Cairo agreement. The ten-point Tripoli Agreement specified that "the Arab people of Yemen shall establish a single State which shall be called the Yemeni Republic".

In December 1972 this unification agreement was ratified, after bitter debate, by the

Consultative Council of the YAR. That body, dominated by tribal chiefs, did not hesitate to express its opposition to the re-unification plans. On December 28 the principal advocate of the agreement, Aini, was forced to resign and was replaced by Judge Abdullah el Hijri, an old royalist with open pro-Saudi sympathies. In 1973, after his visit to Saudi Arabia, progressive forces revealed that in exchange for some 100,000,000 dollars, Yemeni sovereignty had been ceded to the Saudis over the territories of Asir, Najrane and Jizzane, occupied since 1934.

In May 1973 Sheikh Mohammed Ali Osman, a member of the Presidential (Republican) Council, who was known as a moderate in the government, was assassinated, and this once again complicated the situation in the country.

On February 10, 1974, El Hijri was removed from the government and was replaced by Hassan Makki at a time when work was resumed by a mixed constitutional commission entrusted, together with other inter-Yemeni commissions, with the preparation of the legal aspects of the merger of the two Yemeni states.

On June 13, 1974, a military coup overthrew the Al-Iriani government and placed in power Lieut. Col. Ibrahim Mohammed al-Hamdi, who appointed Moshain al-Aini as Prime Minister. Al-Aini headed the government until January of the following year, when he was replaced by Abdelaziz Abdel Ghani.

The coup was preceded by the dissolution of the Republican Council (a collegiate presidency) and of the Consultative Council (which was a kind of parliament), which were replaced by a Command Council with Al Hamdi as its president and composed of some ten military commanders. A provisional constitution was promulgated on June 19, which gave extensive powers to the new Command Council.

Although initially, when he seized power, Al Hamdi seemed bent on a rapprochement with Saudi Arabia to the detriment of national reconciliation, his government activity gradually promoted an improvement of its relations with its neighbour to the south.

During his presidency, Al Hamdi removed from the government men who had direct links with Saudi Arabia, including the powerful chiefs of the northern tribes, the sheikhs Abdullah al-Ahmar and Sinan Abou Luhum, the Governor of Hodeida, both of whom left the country and found refuge in Saudi Arabia.

The new President instituted a number of reforms, including the construction of a road network and of schools. These moves were greatly disliked by the Saudis but, on the other hand, won great popularity for Al Hamdi in the centre of power, who was faced by the danger of conflict with the traditional social forces represented by the tribes, whose authority still continued to be considerable.

In July 1977 this opposition once again reached a critical point. An armed uprising broke out in the north of the country, led by Sheikh Abdullah al-Ahmar and supported by Sheikh Sinan Abou Luhum. Al Hamdi had to use the army and the air force to stifle this revival of tribal irredentism on which the powerful Saudi neighbour relied in the endeavour to maintain his position as arbitrator in the YAR.

Parallel with these internal events, which were accompanied by contradictions and authoritarian excesses, the regime in Sanaa tried to promote a rapprochement with Aden, notwithstanding the opposition of certain tribes.

At the time of the conspiracy of October 11, 1977, in which he died, Al Hamdi planned to make an official visit to Aden in return for a visit to Sanaa by the South Yemeni President in January.

In a letter Al Hamdi addressed to the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, he included suggestions for a national anthem and a flag common for both countries, as well as for the creation of a common defence body.

During the period of his presidency Al Hamdi frustrated three assassination attempts by men closely tied with the chiefs of the northern tribes.

After the failure of these assassination attempts, Al Hamdi was invited to Saudi Arabia. During that visit, the Saudis imposed on him a "national reconciliation" providing for the return to the north of the YAR of the tribal chiefs who had fought Al Hamdi's government. By yielding to the Saudi pressure, Al Hamdi lost the support of some of his adherents. However, in spite of the concluded agreement, President Al Hamdi was in no hurry to comply with Riyadh's demands.

On October 11, 1977, Lieut. Col. Ahmed Hussein Ghashmi organized the assassination of the President and of his brother, Major Abdallah al-Hamdi.

Having killed Al Hamdi, the pro-Saudi elements led by Lieut. Col. Ahmed Hussein Ghashmi seized power in the YAR. Saudi Arabia immediately announced that it was granting the new government a credit of 57,000,000 dollars to help finance the five-year development plan for the period 1976-1981.

In the initial period of his rule, Ghashmi tried to consolidate his position with the help of three military members of the Council. He also appointed a 99-member Constitutent Assembly, whose task was to "provide the country with fundamental organic laws and to express its opinion on the form of power in North Yemen".

This new Assembly, meeting at a special session on April 22, 1978, elected Ghashmi as head of state.

The tribal chiefs were quick in presenting to President Ghashmi—in spite of his obvious turn to the right—a list of demands, including the re-establishment of the Consultative Council, made up of tribal notables, the formation of a "people's" army whose members would be subordinated to their own tribes, a clear and unambiguous decision against the democratic government in South Yemen, return of the troops to their barracks and release of political prisoners.

In response to these demands by the tribal groups, the patriotic organizations of North Yemen organized a large demonstration in the town of Sedda in the central part of the country, at which more than 20,000 people voiced their opposition to the return of tribalism and denounced new incidents along the frontiers with Democratic Yemen, which were provoked by tribal groups directed by Saudi Arabia, as well as the presence of mercenaries in the frontier areas.

The Ghashmi government had three options—to permit a return of the tribal chiefs to the forefront of the political scene, to keep power in the country in the hands of the military by making concessions to the tribal chiefs but reducing their power, or—which was least probable—to move closer to the progressive forces.

However, Ghashmi had no opportunity of choosing either option. He was killed on June 24, 1978, when a bomb exploded in his office as he was to meet a special South Yemeni envoy.

The government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen strongly condemned this crime in an official statement and refused to accept any responsibility for the assassination, whose objective was—according to the statement—to draw the Yemeni people into a war planned by the imperialists (see "People's Democratic Republic of Yemen").

A four-man Presidential Council was immediately appointed under the provisional chairmanship of Abdel Karim el-Archi. Subsequently he was replaced by Ali Abdullah Saleh.

On September 4, 1978, the government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen denounced a renewal of mercenary attacks from the north, which threatened peace on the Arabian Peninsula, while armed uprisings erupted in different parts of the country.

Another crisis, smaller than the crisis of 1972, but of quite an importance under the political conditions prevailing in the Arabian Peninsula, followed. After more than ten days of hostilities, mediation efforts by the Arab League put an end to the conflict. Thereafter, a new round of negotiations took place under Kuwaiti auspices between representatives of the two Yemeni states, which revived the re-unification plans. In the opinion of the heads-of-state of both parts of the Yemeni nation, a unified country would become an element of peace, stability and security in the region—as stated in a communique published in Kuwait following the conclusion of the negotiations in the early months of 1979.

Somewhat later, negotiations with the various opposition groups constituting the National Democratic Front, founded in 1976, resulted in the announcement that elections would be held soon, the first in the country since 1962. The opposition then qualified as constructive the dialogue established with President Saleh, who also permitted—as announced—the formation of political parties.

In September 1980 the head-of-state of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, Ali Nasser Mohammed, visited Sanaa, thus beginning a new era of rapprochement between the two countries.

The formation of a new cabinet was announced in October 1980, headed by Abdelaziz Abdel Ghani, just as was the appointment of two Vice-Presidents of the Republic—Abdel Ghani himself and Abdel Karim al-Arishi.

Economy: The Yemen Arab Republic is one of the poorest countries in the Arab world Its economy is based on agriculture, which is the most important in its production in the whole Arabian Peninsula and which in 1978 accounted for 50% of the country's GNP, provided employment for 73% of its economically active population, and whose products constituted 80% of the known exports. According to United Nations data published in 1977, 1,500,000 hectares of land were under cultivation, i.e., 8% of the country's total area. However, statistics show that the area under cultivation has been somewhat reduced, as in the case of coffee, whose production is being cut in favour of the cultivation of *kat*—a narcotic plant of widespread local consumption. This situation made the government order steps in 1972 aimed at reducing the cultivation and use of *kat*, but without much success.

The principal crops grown in the highlands include citrus and other fruits and vegetables, while in the coastal area of Tihama, dates, tobacco and cotton are being grown. Also produced are some cereals, the principal being sorghum, of which 895,000 tons were harvested in 1976, while in the same year the output of maize was 72,000 tons, of barley 75,000 tons and of wheat 52,000 tons. The five-year plan for the period 1976-1981 calls for 146% increase in the production of wheat and a 21% increase in the output of other cereal crops, but these targets may be hard to achieve in view of the feudal land tenure still prevailing in large parts of the country.

Livestock production included in 1977, 3,300,000 goats, 1,050,000 head of cattle, 650,000 donkeys and 4,000 horses.

Industry accounts for barely 5% of the GNP and provides employment for 4% of the active labour force. Its main products are textiles, leather goods, handicraft articles, blown glass and jewellery.

The country's most important industrial plants are a textile mill in Sanaa, employing 1,500 workers, two cotton mills in Hodeida and Zebid, two cement mills in Bajil and Taiz, built with Soviet assistance, and a factory producing cottonseed oil in Hodeida.

The only mineral produced on a large scale is salt, which is of high quality and which is almost all being exported. The country's largest salt-processing plant, which was built with Kuwaiti financial assistance, is located in Salif. Light industry also includes a liquid oxygen plant supplied by the Soviet Union, which also supplied a fish-processing plant.

The country is known to have a number of mineral deposits, including coal, copper, iron, zinc, silver, gold and uranium, although none of them is being exploited. Discovery of petroleum in the Tihama area was announced in 1972, and an agreement with the Shell Company was signed in 1976 for its possible exploitation. Japanese and U.S. companies also have concessions on prospecting for off-shore petroleum.

The fishing industry produced a catch of 175,000 tons in 1977.

The YAR has 1,650 km of roads and there is an ambitious development plan in this field. There are three international airports in the country—in Sanaa, Taiz and Hodeida—and four seaports of importance—in Mocca, Salif, Loheiya and Hodeida—the last being the most important of them.

The first development plan put into effect by the YAR covered the period 1973 to 1976, and in its course the country's GNP grew at the annual rate of 7%. A second plan—for the period 1976-1981—was based on investments totalling 3,640 million dollars, most of them coming from foreign sources in the form of aid and intended for the development of transport and communications (2,604 km of roads), of industry and mining. One of its targets was to raise the production of electric power from 13.4 to 55.2 mW a year.

North Yemeni trade is suffering from a chronic lack of balance. In 1978 imports exceeded in value 12,000,000 dollars, while exports were worth only 1,040,000 dollars. The country's main suppliers were Saudi Arabia, Japan, Great Britain, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen and Australia, while exports went to Saudi Arabia, the People's Republic of Yemen, Italy and Djibouti as the principal customers. The national budget for the fiscal year 1979-1980 showed a deficit of more than 1,371 million rials. The 1978 GNP amounted to 2,960,000 dollars, while per capita income was about 250 dollars in the same year. The national currency is the Yemeni rial, whose rate of exchange was 4.56 per U.S. dollar in January 1980.

Government: The republican institutions of the YAR have been greatly affected by the country's persistent political instability. Between 1974 and 1976, under the government of Ibrahim al Hamdi, three supreme bodies were established—the Command Council, the cabinet, and the Consultative Council. The work of the Command Council is directed by the head of state, while the cabinet is entrusted with implementation of the policy set by that body. The Consultative Council was dissolved in 1976. It was endowed with certain authority in the legislative area and its 159 members were largely representative of the different tribal factions.

After Al Hamdi's assassination, a three-man Presidential Council was instituted and on February 7, 1978, the Command Council decided to form a Constituent Assembly—also called the National Assembly—of 99 members with the task of amending the country's constitution.

Under the government of Ali Abdullah Saleh, an Auxiliary Council was appointed, whose 15 members assisted the head of state in his work, and the membership of the Constituent Assembly was enlarged to 159.

Islamic law dominates the country's judicial system. It consists of local courts, which have lesser jurisdiction, and a special court in Sanaa, which was given the competence to try crimes of a political nature.

Administratively, the YAR is divided into ten provinces headed by a governor, and each province is divided into a number of *gadas*. Each of the total of 41 *gadas* is subdivided into *nabiyas*, of which there are 165.

Armed forces: In 1979 the armed forces of the YAR had the total of 39,850 men, of whom 37,600 served in the army. There is also a small navy of 750 men and an air force of 1,500 men. The large military budgets are often funded by Saudi Arabia, as in 1978, when the purchase was announced of 400,000,000 dollars worth of American weapons.

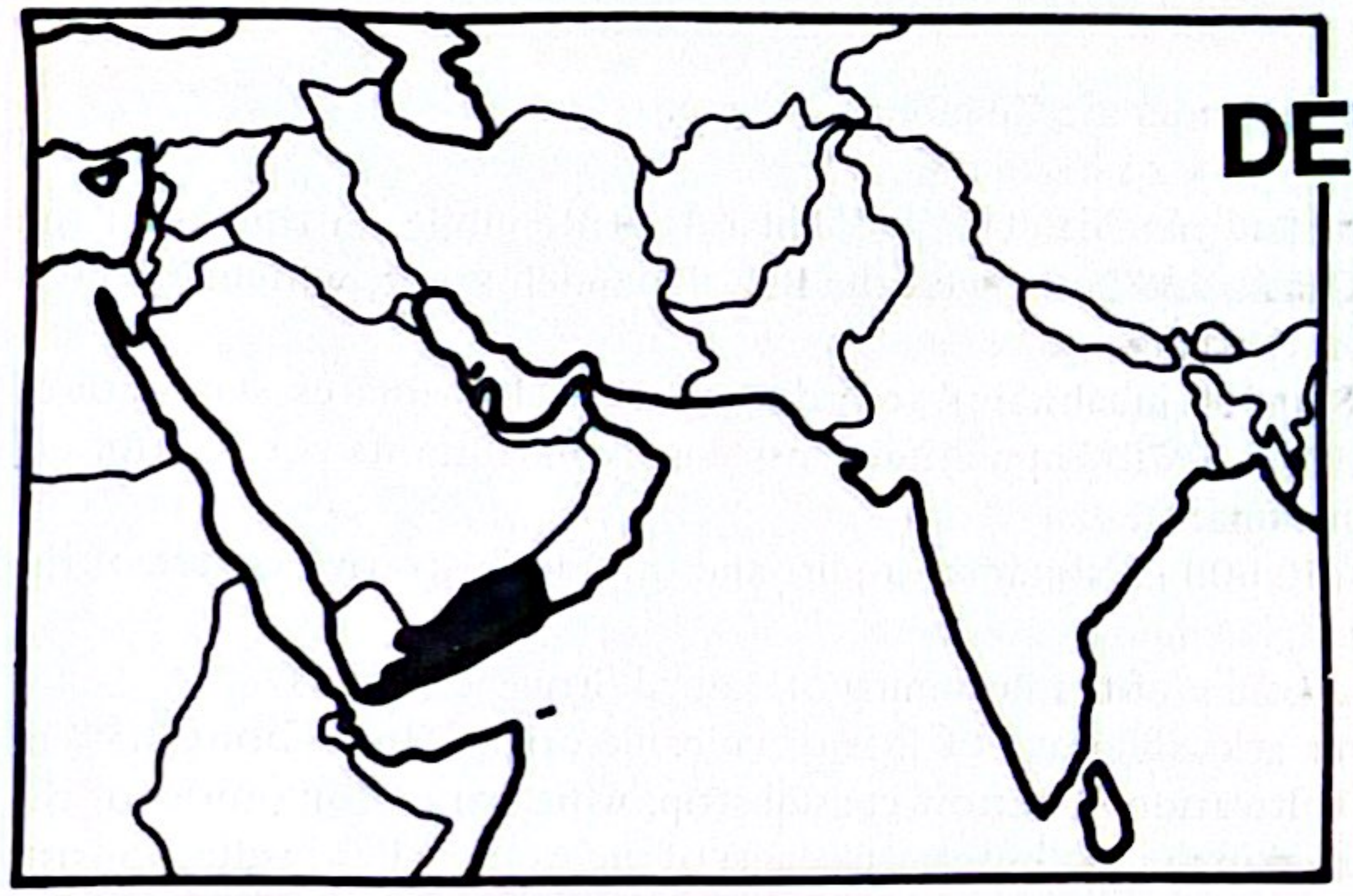
The tribes possess varied armaments and there also exist paramilitary forces again mostly financed by the Saudis, who thus conspire against the authority of the state.

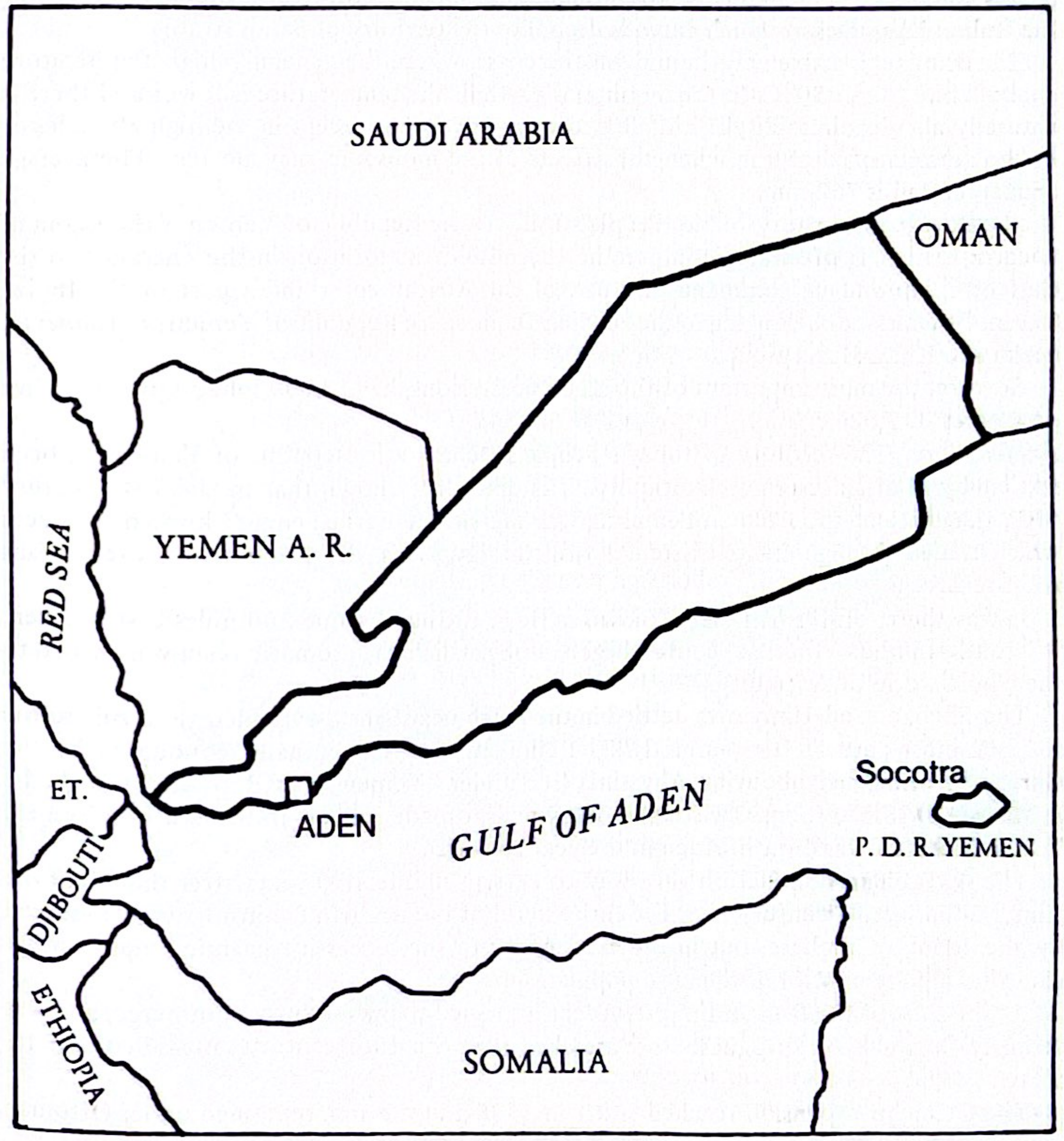
Education: Prior to the proclamation of the republic in 1962, no less than 95% of the population were illiterate. Today, the illiteracy rate has been reduced to 90%. In 1977 primary schools were attended by 252,726 pupils, 23,429 students attended secondary schools, and some 2,408 students were enrolled in higher educational facilities. There is a university in Sanaa with an enrolment of 3,129 students.

Public health: Sanitary conditions rank among the poorest in the Arab world. In 1979 there was one doctor per 26,440 inhabitants and a hospital bed for every 1,443. The infant mortality rate ranges from 200 to 250 per 1,000 births. Malaria and tuberculosis are most prominent among the endemic diseases.

Religion: The great majority of the population are Moslems. Approximately 60% belong to the Shaffi rite of the Shi'a branch of Islam and 40% are adherents of the Saidi rite of the Sunni branch. There is a Hebrew minority.

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN





Official name: The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.
Area: 332,968 sq.km.
Borders: In the north are Saudi Arabia and the Yemen Arab Republic, in the south the Indian Ocean, in the east Oman, and in the west the Bab el Mandeb Strait, which separates the country from the Horn of Africa.
Population: There are 1,840,000 inhabitants according to official estimates. The rate of population growth was 2.9% in 1978. Population density is six inhabitants per sq. km.
Capital: Aden (365,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Mukalla (50,000 inhabitants), a port and the administrative centre of the Fifth and Sixth Provinces.
Public holidays: October 14, Day of the Beginning of Armed Struggle (1963).
Geography: The country is arid and most of it is of volcanic origin. Only about 2.5% of its territory is suited for cultivation. A narrow coastal strip, which runs along most of the length of the country located in the south-western corner of the Arabian Peninsula, consists of low hills which gradually rise towards the interior until they form the high plateau of the Rub al Khali Desert which extends deep into the territory of Saudi Arabia.

The climate is extremely humid on the coast, where the generally high temperature exceeds more than 50°C. In the mountains and hills the temperature is lower and there is naturally also less humidity. Rainfall is scant and irregular, except in the high altitudes or in the seasons of the year when the effects of the monsoons may be felt. The average annual rainfall is 762 mm.

A part of the territory of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen is the island of Socotra, which is of strategic importance because of its location in the entrance to the Gulf of Aden and its command of a part of the African coast and a part of the Indian Ocean. Other islands belonging to the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen are Kamaran, Perim and Kuria Muria group.

Socotra, the most important of the island possessions, has 17,000 inhabitants, who live on an area of 3,626 sq.km.

Brief history: The territory of today's People's Democratic Republic of Yemen has been settled by man since remote Antiquity. It is definitely known that in the 14th century B.C., that part of the Arabian Peninsula was the site of a tribal empire known as Mineo, which traded throughout its existence with the Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians and the Greeks.

It was there, on a small island known as Husn al Ghurab some 200 miles east of Aden, where the famous "Incense Route" began, along which the aromatic resin was carried to the whole world of Antiquity.

The Shebans and Himyarits, settled in the north near Sanaa, extended their rule to the southernmost part of the peninsula. The Himyarits were eventually conquered by the Christians ruling neighbouring Abyssinia (see under "Yemen Arab Republic") in the lst century A.D, Since then, Christianity and Judaism made inroads in the south of Yemen. The first church was built in Aden in the year 356 A.D.

The Abyssinian domination gave way to Persian invaders 50 years after the fall of the Himyarit empire. A century later the entire south of the Arabian Peninsula was conquered by the Islamic Caliphate, but in the extreme south the successive Islamic empires never gained complete control of the local population.

At the time of the Roman Empire, Aden flourished thanks to busy commerce, and was strongly fortified. A Portuguese fleet attacked it in the 16th century, but failed to dominate it.

The Ottoman expansion reached Aden in 1538 and the area remained under Ottoman rule until 1839, when the British arrived on the scene.

In that year the British seized control of Yemen in order to protect their ships sailing to the Orient and to maintain their hegemony over the Arabian Peninsula, which they turned into a powerful bastion of colonialism in the Middle East.

The British occupation of Yemen was marked by determination to hold on perpetually to this strategic area.

After the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the British did not attempt to penetrate the interior of the country. Their major concern was to consolidate their hold on the coast and to appease the native tribes.

Between 1839 and 1882, Britain pursued a "good neighbour" policy towards the inhabitants of the country's interior. Formal power remained in the hands of the feudal lords, the emirs and sultans, but real power was wielded by the local representatives of British colonialism.

In 1886 Great Britain signed the first of a number of treaties with the feudal rulers from the interior and with the Sultan of Qishn and Socotra. The next year a similar treaty was signed with the Sultan of Lahej. At the time when her colonial domination of the area ended in the 20th century, Britain has such treaties with 31 of the small sultanates, under which these rulers pledged not to negotiate with other powers and not to cede their territory to anybody but the British, all in exchange for British protection.

In the period between 1854 and 1915, the British gained possession of the islands of Kuria Muria, Perim and Kamaran.

The strategic importance of Yemen was greatly enhanced by the opening of the Suez Canal, and the Turks once again became eager to possess its territory. Britain tried to prevent the Turkish penetration of Yemen between 1882 and 1918, and for this reason arranged in 1914 for the division of the country by forming a Turkish Yemen in the north and a British Yemen in the south, separated by a so-called "Violet Line". With some minor changes, this divisions has continued to this day.

The destruction of the Ottoman Empire in World War I brought about the liberation of North Yemen under a feudal regime, which fact was not to the liking of the British colonialists, who never ceased to conspire against that country until the signing in 1934 of the Treaty of Sanaa, following the invasion of North Yemen by Saudi forces with British assistance. The treaty established the permanent character of the Yemeni frontiers, as they had been agreed upon with the Turks over a period of 40 years. Three years later, the British launched a policy of penetration of the interior of the country.

This new design of the British colonial power ran into strong Yemeni opposition, but the unceasing pressure exerted by the colonial authorities on the local sultans resulted in the eventual realization of this plan.

The city of Aden, the surrounding territory and various villages in its vicinity were officially proclaimed a British colony in 1937.

Earlier, the so-called Aden Settlement has been incorporated in the British possessions ruled from Bombay, and in 1932 it had been proclaimed a province subordinated to the central government in India. Already then, Aden was one of the most important British military bases in the Middle East. Major port facilities had been built there, and since 1928, Aden was also the site of a Royal Air Force base.

Between 1938 and 1954, the British used in their relations with the sultanates encircling their Aden Colony a system of supervisors imposed by the colonial power. In that period, 13 of these "envoys" were installed in order to control on the spot the rule of the sultans, to help these British allies with any problems with their tribes, and, most of all, to ensure that the orders issued by the Governor of Aden were observed in the western and eastern parts of the territory.

In 1955 a number of sultans met in Aden to study a new British plan for the establishment of a federation which would associate all the small sultanates.

Initially, a majority of these sultans were opposed to the idea, but since the proposal was to form a unified apparatus which would act efficiently and in a co-ordinated manner against the opposition movements in existence, six sultanates in the area agreed to establish a union called the Federation of Arab Emirates on February 11, 1959. In the same year members were elected in Aden of the Legislative Council in keeping with the colonial status of the territory. Other emirs and sheikhs joined the union, until it included 16 states.

In 1964, after the Congress of London, the city of Aden was incorporated in the federation, which was renamed South Arabia, but the colonialists reserved for themselves the right to maintain their important military base in the city even after they had granted promised independence to the federation. Both the colony and the sultanates were subordinated to the sovereignty and hegemonistic power of the government in London.

After the Anglo-French aggression against Egypt in 1956, Great Britain decided to strengthen her positions in South Yemen and in the entire Middle East. For this purpose the British argued that the strategic importance of Yemen made that country not only a British interest, but an interest of the West in general. This importance, they added, was triple—military in general, as a key point in the protection of the Middle East petroleum resources and local.

Actually, the formation of the South Arabian Federation was merely a means of checking the rebellion that had already enveloped the territory.

1963 saw the beginning of the armed struggle launched by the South Yemen National Liberation Front, which was formed in June of that year by the merger of several Marxist and nationalist Arab groups. In the same year the British government announced that Britain would withdraw from Yemen in 1969, but its attempts to place in power a group of elements servile to neocolonialism were thwarted by a decisive action of the Yemeni people and their revolutionary vanguard. The South Yemen National Liberation Front launched the struggle on October 14, 1963, leading a people's revolution against colonialism and imperialism.

The insurrection soon gained such a force that the occupiers declared as a "zone of hostilities" the entire region surrounding the town of Dala in the mountainous area of Radfan, which included 160 communities.

In January 1964 British troops, aided by some tribal forces led by elements dependent on Great Britain, launched "Operation Nutcracker" against the insurgents in Radfan. The colonialists evicted people from their homes, burned down the villages and concentrated the population in a single area to deny it freedom of movement. British planes flew as many as 14 bombing sorties against Radfan a day, and between May and July of that year destroyed 85% of the settlements in the area.

In the same period, the working class, acting through its trade unions and political parties, repeatedly demonstrated its militancy by strikes, protest actions and demonstrations in the port of Aden.

As early as 1964 the patriotic forces had opened eight fronts of guerilla war in all the provinces. Soon thereafter, the National Front had to repel attacks by mercenaries organized by the colonialists and domestic reaction. By then the Front had changed its name to Front for the Liberation of South Yemen (FLOSY).

In 1965 the British High Commissioner in Aden announced the suspension of the colonial constitution and the resumption of direct colonial rule in tacit recognition of the spread of the insurrection to the whole territory of the country.

In 1966 the British felt obliged to open negotiations with FLOSY, which actually controlled three-quarters of the territory.

The next year, the success of the people's struggle caused the collapse of the colony and of the Federation created by the colonialists.

The victory was won in the autumn of 1967. On November 30 of that year, the flag of the British occupation army was lowered. Major Kenneth Robson surrendered the city and the last British ship left Aden, carrying the last colonial troops which had still remained in the country. This put an end to the 129 years of colonial domination.

South Yemen was free, but the task still remained of gaining economic independence and of consolidating the people's state.

The country experienced a serious economic crisis due to the closure of the Suez Canal as a result of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, which broke out only five days before the proclamation of independence. With the Suez Canal out of operation, the average of 6,000 ships which had arrived every year in the port of Aden was reduced to less than 200. This almost paralyzed the port activities and made some 30,000 workers jobless; they were forced to join the ranks of the unemployed left after the withdrawal of the British occupation army.

On the other hand, political power was usurped by rightist elements in the National Liberation Front, who launched a wave of repression with the objective of eliminating the most prominent leftist personalities.

The conflict between the two wings within the NLF came fully to the fore at the Fourth Congress of that organization, held at Zinjibar, near Aden, in March 1968. The congress approved the political line of the most progressive wing but the rightists persisted in their actions designed to blunt the Yemeni revolution. After new repressive measures had been taken against the militant, progressive members of the NLF, the latter launched a series of armed actions in the second, third and fifth regions, thereby initiating a new stage of the revolution; at the same time they had to confront an offensive by tribal forces, inspired by Saudi Arabia.

On June 22, 1969, a Presidential Council of five members assumed the leadership of the state and consolidated a movement to steer the revolutionary process on to a proper course.

The party, military and government apparatus was purged of rightist elements. Once this stage had been completed, the National Front approved in 1969 a law nationalizing foreign trade, banking and insurance companies controlled by foreign capital. Thus, a large part of the national economy was freed of foreign dependence.

"The People's Revolution of October 14," states a declaration issued by the National Front on June 22, 1969, "not only completed the last stages of the people's struggle, but also pursued the objectives of a popular democratic revolution."

A revolutionary army replaced the old reactionary apparatus, people's forces—militias and People's Defence Committees—were created, as well as federations of women, workers, peasants and democratic youth.

The officers' corps of the army left by the colonial power, whose members were the sons of wealthy families with close ties with the British colonialists, was replaced by honest individuals, most of whom had fought in the ranks of the patriotic forces during the anti-imperialist struggle.

The neighbouring governments in Saudi Arabia, North Yemen and the Sultanate of Oman have promoted at different times since the institution of the Corrective Movement on June 22, various attempts to destabilize the South Yemeni state, which was being mainly accused of having chosen scientific socialism as the road to national development.

The Saudis in particular were very active in trying to impede the realization of the patriotic aspirations of the two parts of the Yemeni nation to achieve a reunification of the country, which had been divided as a result of British colonialism.

In North Yemen elements with the closest ties to the Saudi monarchy received assistance from their powerful neighbour to launch two major aggressive operations against the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen—in 1972 and 1979. However, in both cases the young state emerged from the conflicts victorious, and the common resolve to reunify the nation was strengthened. In 1972 agreements were signed in Cairo and Tripoli that outline the general principles of such a union (see under "Yemen Arab Republic").

A political event of great significance took place in the country on October 14, 1975—the formation of the Unified Political Organization of the National Front (UPONF). This organization, which integrated the National Liberation Front, the People's Democratic Union and the People's Vanguard Party, represented the culmination of the process of unification of all the revolutionary forces. The UPONF was the true successor of the NLF and the initiator of the most important developments in the country in recent years, and it played the decisive role in the four years of the national liberation war.

After the Unification Congress of 1975, which established the UPONF, the leadership of South Yemen began to pave the ground for the creation of a leading revolutionary party. However, the former chairman of the Presidential Council, Salem Robaya Ali, showed deviationist trends opposed to the formation of a Marxist-Leninist party and the unification of the country. In the last months of 1977 and the first half of 1978—as reported by an official announcement—Robaya Ali rallied around himself revenge-seeking elements, individuals purged from the army and advocates of closer ties with the reactionary Arab regimes in the area and of a return to the old, class relationships in Yemeni society. This situation produced a crisis when the President of the Yemen Arab Republic, Ahmed Hussein al-Ghashmi, was assinassinated on June 24, 1978. His murder provoked a grave crisis between the two countries. Robaya Ali was summoned to a session of the Political Bureau of UPONF, which decided to dismiss him from office because of his known activities. Meanwhile, as the Central Committee discussed the ways of informing the people about the situation, the ex-President staged an abortive armed revolt at down on June 25, 1978. Robaya Ali was arrested, tried and executed together with some of his closest collaborators. A five-member council was immediately set up, which appointed Prime Minister Ali Nasser Mohammed as the new President. He also kept his old post.

After those events, preparations were speeded up for the establishment of a vanguard party. Local and army UPONF conferences elected delegates to a constituent congress of the Yemeni Socialist Party, which was held from October 11 to 13, 1978. Prior to the congress, the 12th plenary session of the UPONF approved the drafts of the statutes and the platform of the Yemeni Socialist Party, whose constitution represents a victory for the working class and a guarantee of national unity and of the continuity of the revolution launched on October 14, 1963.

Also elected in 1978 were members of the Yemeni National Assembly and a People's Supreme Council, and in the six regions which make up the country, People's Councils were democratically chosen.

On April 21, 1980, the head of state, Ali Nasser Mohammed, succeeded Abdel Fattah Ismail as General Secretary of the Yemeni Socialist Party, who had to retire from political life because of ill health.

In October of the same year, the Yemeni Socialist Party held a special congress, which elected a Political Bureau of five full members and two substitute members, and a Central Committee of 47 full and 11 substitute members. The top bodies of the Party also include a Secretariat of five members.

After the special session of the Yemeni Socialist Party, a ministerial reorganization was announced, under which a cabinet of 22 members was formed, including three Vice-Premiers.

Ali Nasser Mohammed has pursued a policy which domestically aims at overcoming the grave economic and social problems inherited from the long colonial period, which place the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen among the poorest Arab countries. The government has concluded a number of cooperation agreements with different socialist countires, including the Soviet Union, where the formation of a Standing Commission for Bilateral Cooperation was announced in May 1980 on the occasion of an official visit by the South Yemeni President.

In the same year, Ali Nasser re-asserted his country's determination to pursue a process of reunification with the North, when he was on a visit to Sanaa, the capital of the Yemen Arab Republic.

Economy: Agriculture is the country's main economic activity; it accounts for approximately 23% of the GNP but provides employment for more than 182,000 people, i.e., 75% of the economically active population, according to 1977 figures. The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen has an estimated 1,500,000 *feddans* (one *feddan* equals 4,200 sq.m) of cultivable land, but only one-fifth of this area is actually under cultivation. The most intensively farmed areas are those of Abyam, east of Aden, and Lahej, north of the capital. The valleys in the Hadramaut region are also fertile and it is there that a number of state-sponsored agricultural projects are being carried out.

According to FAO figures, published in 1977, the country's principal products include cotton (15,000 tons), millet (65,000 tons) and wheat (27,000 tons). It is self-sufficient in vegetables and its output of cereals is also considerable.

According to official figures relating to the 1974-1979 economic development plan, agricultural production increased over that period by 30%.

In 1978 the country had 107,000 head of cattle, 950,000 sheep and 1,360,000 goats.

The fishing industry has good prospects of future development. It employs some 10,000 people and is mainly centred in the Mukalla region. A catch of 161,700 metric tons of fish was reported in 1977. In order to develop its fishing industry, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen has received assistance from several socialist countries, including the Soviet Union and Cuba, as well as financial aid from Iraq. Under the 1974-1979 five-year plan, the fishing industry increased its production by 137% compared with 1973.

Of South Yemeni industrial production 80% still depends on petroleum refining carried out by the Little Aden refinery, which had been owned by the British Petroleum Company. The plant has a total production capacity of 6,000,000 tons annually, although in recent years it has been working considerably under this capacity, due to the problems with the supply of crude petroleum. Saudi Arabia, which had been the main supplier of the refinery when it used to be owned by the British, has severely hampered South Yemeni economic activity on various occasions by suspending petroleum deliveries. In 1977 Kuwait concluded an agreement with the government of the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen on the annual supply of 300,000 tons of crude petroleum, which—together with other suppliers—keeps the Little Aden refinery in operation.

With the assistance of the Soviet Union and other countries, the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen has launched a programme of diversification of industry, which in the period 1974-1979 already produced a 167% growth of industrial output compared with the 1973 level.

Major effort is being made in petroleum prospecting, with the participation of Canada, Italy, Algeria and other countries. The Soviet Union and Cuba, too, are involved in this activity within the framework of their economic cooperation with the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen.

Other industrial activity of some significance includes the manufacture of cement blocks and bricks, production of salt (76,000 tons in 1978), textile manufacture and processing of cottonseed oil.

Petroleum prospecting is paralleled by exploration of the country's mineral resources, in particular of copper-ore deposits, while in the eastern provinces a survey is also being carried out of possible zinc, lead, silver, gold and molybdenum deposits, although no important mineral resources are known to exist thus far.

In the period 1974-1979, production of electric power rose close to 340,000,000 kWh.

Aden is the principal port of the country and one of the most important in the whole region. Its operations were seriously affected by the closure of the Suez Canal in 1967, at which time it serviced approximately 500 ships every month. In recent years, a large-scale programme of capital construction, involving investments of more than 30,000,000 dollars, has been launched in order to improve the existing port facilities. Other important ports are those of Mukalla and Khalf, both of which are principally fishing centres.

There are more than 5,000 km of roads. Under the first five-year plan the sector of transport and communications grew by 234% compared with 1973.

Pursuing the objective of extricating the country from its state of extreme underdevelopment, the government has launched since 1971 different plans to spur economic development. The first, a three-year plan (1971-1974), provided for investments worth 25,100,000 dinars. It was followed by the first five-year plan (1974-1979), in the course of which more than 75,000,000 dinars were invested and gross production rose by 50% compared with the 1973 level, while per capita income increased from 100 to 128 dollars.

The latest five-year plan (1981-1985), announced in 1980, envisages a 65% increase in investments, which will amount to 1,200,000,000 dollars, while GNP is expected to rise by 61%. Agricultural production in particular is expected to expand by 52.2% in comparison with its 1980 level. Great significance is being attached in the realization of this plan to its coordination with the plans of the member-states of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance.

In September 1979 the country's international monetary reserves were estimated at 213,000,000 dollars. As for its balance of trade, it seems to show a deficit, since the figures given greatly vary.

The national currency is the Yemeni dinar, whose rate of exchange in January 1980 was 3.40 per U.S. dollar.

Government: The Council of Ministers, appointed in 1980, has 25 members, three of whom are Vice-Premiers. The Supreme People's Council is the legislative body; it is headed by a Presidium whose chairman is Ali Nasser Mohammed, who also holds the post of Prime Minister.

Administratively, the country is divided into six provinces, each headed by a governor.

Under a new constitution members of parliament may be elected by all citizens over 18. The right to be elected member of provincial People's Committees belongs to men and women 21 to 23 years old. In order to be eligible for election to the Supreme People's Council, a citizen must be over 24 years of age. Justice is administered by a Superior Court and a Magistrates' Court.

Armed forces: The strength of the armed forces was increased in 1978 to approximately 40,000 men, and in addition, a special airborne division was also formed. The armed forces consist of ground troops, an air force and a navy.

There is also a people's militia, made up of workers, peasants and students, which has several score thousand members.

Organizations: The Yemeni Socialist Party, founded in 1978 (see under "Brief history"). The Union of Yemeni Democratic Youth, founded in 1973, has about 35,000 basic units in places of work, military units and villages.

The People's Defence Committees (PDC) are the most widespread mass organization of the people. The first PDC was formed in the village of Sheikh Osman on May 30, 1973, in support of the revolution. There are 2,289 PDSs with a total membership of 120,000.

The Yemeni Trade Union Movement is the main workers' organization in the country. There is a works committee in every enterprise.

The Federation of Yemeni Women guides women's activities in aiding production and in supporting actions sponsored by the Revolutionary Government.

Education and sports: At the time of the revolutionary victory, the illiteracy rate was 90%. There were only 249 schools in the whole country and the total number of pupils did not exceed 60,000.

By 1976 illiteracy in the 15 to 45 age group had dropped to 45%.

A national literacy campaign was launched in 1973 in keeping with a law enacted in 1972, which provided that the objectives of the campaign should be realized by 1978 and, moreover, that education was free and compulsory from the age of seven.

The same law also provides for central planning of education with the objective of determining the real needs as regards the number of teachers and educational institutions, as well as for the training of personnel for the realization of the educational programme. Elimination of illiteracy by more than 80% was envisaged for 1979.

In 1976 the number of schools had risen to 1,174 and their enrolment was up to 388,230 pupils. The first university in the country, founded in 1975, has a medical faculty, an agricultural faculty and a faculty of economics. It has a student body of 1,262. There is also a polytechnical school and a workshop school for women. A law faculty was established recently.

The total number of teachers was 9,277 in 1976.

The first five-year plan (1974-1979) provided for the training of 8,600 new technicians in order to meet the most pressing needs of the different branches of the national economy.

The most popular sport in the country is football, although cycling is also quite widespread.

Public health: In the colonial era the Yemeni people suffered from many endemic diseases and the whole country had only four hospitals, one of them serving exclusively the colonialists, the remaining three being located in the principal towns. There were only ten doctors.

After the revolutionary victory a number of doctors were trained, with the cooperation of the socialist countries, in order to solve the grave situation existing in this important sphere. Medical personnel from friendly countries also helped the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen with their services.

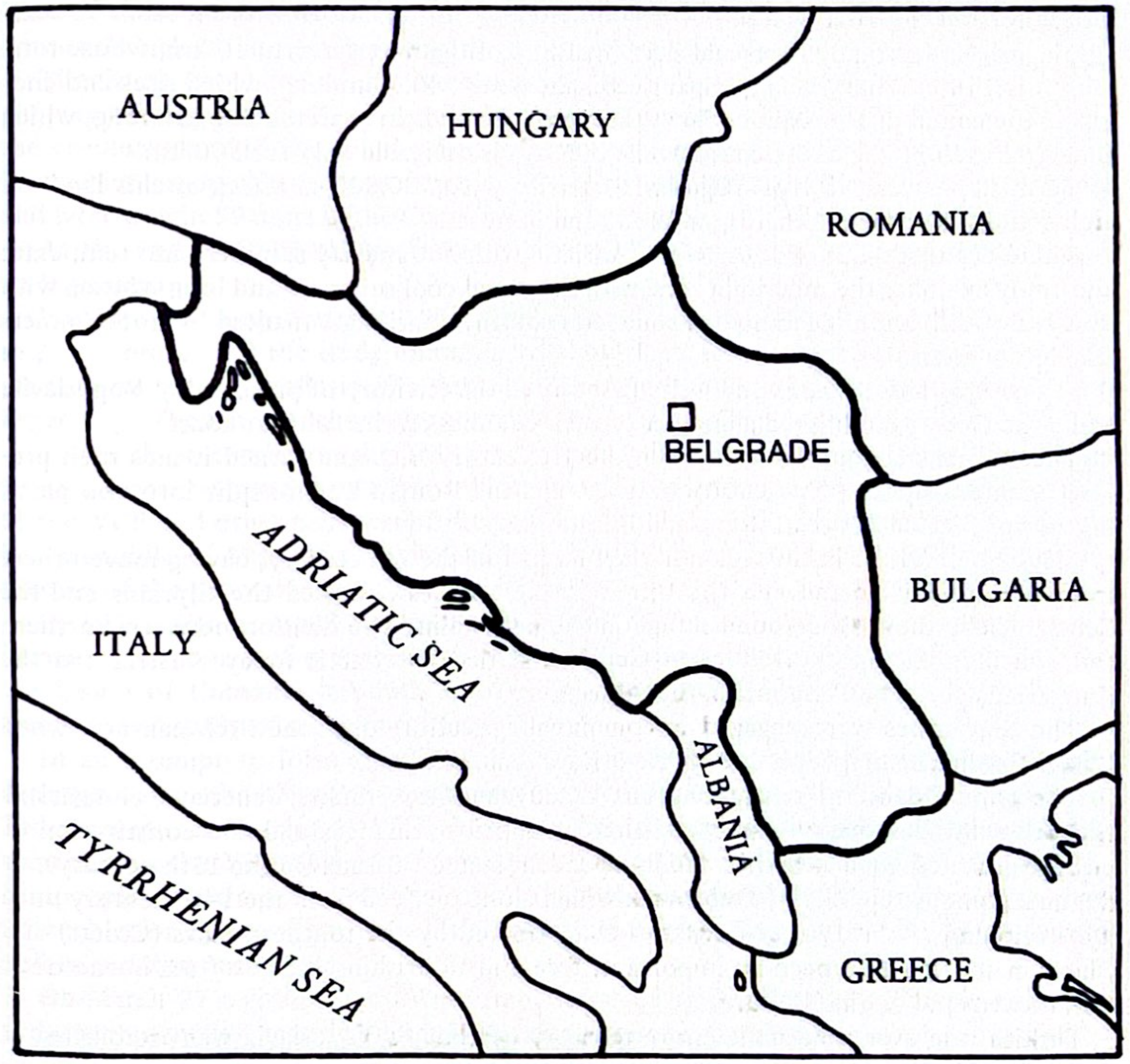
A Faculty of Medicine was established in 1975, staffed by teachers from the Soviet Union, Cuba and other socialist countries. It had 54 students, but in October of the same year their number rose to 64 and in the subsequent years some 50 new doctors graduated annually. In addition, facilities were established for training middle-level medical personnel and nurses. This activity was paralleled by the construction of new public health centres. By 1975, 11 hospitals had been built, raising the total number of hospital facilities to 23, many of them located in the remotest parts of the country, which the colonial regime had utterly ignored.

In 1975, too, a law was enacted which prohibits private medical practice, and initial steps are being taken towards the application of preventive medicine.

By 1978 the number of Yemeni doctors had risen to 150. Under the first five-year plan, which covered the period 1974-1979, the number of hospital centres had risen to 33.

Religion: 98% of the population are Moslems, most of them Sunnis of the Shaffi rite, but there is also quite a number of Shi'ites of the Zaidi branch.

YUGOSLAVIA


AUSTRIA
HUNGARY
ROMANIA
BELGRADE
BULGARIA
ITALY
ADRIATIC SEA
ALBANIA
TYRRHENIAN SEA
GREECE

Official name: The Federative Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia.
Area: 225,804 sq.km.
Borders: In the north-west Yugoslavia borders on Italy, in the north on Austria and Hungary, the the north-east on Rumania, in the east on Bulgaria, in the south on Greece and Albania, and in the south-west on the Adriatic Sea.
Population: 22,442,000.
Capital: Belgrade (1,400,000 inhabitants).
Principal towns: Zagreb, Skopje, Sarajevo, Ljubljana, Novi Sad, Rijeka, Maribor, Split, Nish, Subotica and Titograd.
Languages: There are three languages enjoying full equality—Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian and Slovene.
Public holidays: November 29, Proclamation of the Republic.
Geography: Yugoslavia's topography consists of mountainous areas and lowlands. The mountains stretch in a wide belt from the extreme north-west to the extreme south-east. They include the Alps and the Dinaric range, the Sharo-Pinico massif and the Rhodope range, which are parts of the Balkan and Carpathian ranges. The highest elevation in the country is Mt. Triglav, rising up to 2,863 m above sea level in Slovenia.

The lowlands are in the north, along the Danube and its principal tributaries, the Sava, the Drava and the Tisa.

Yugoslavia has many rivers and streams, 1,850 of them longer than 10 km, whose total length is 118,000 km. The principal river is the Sava, 940.5 km long, which rises and ends inside the country. The Danube flows through Yugoslavia in a stretch 588 km long, which is navigable along the entire course while the Sava is navigable only for 500 km.

Farmland covers 58% of Yugoslavia's territory 10,500,000 hectares of this land are arable and the rest are orchards, meadows and pastures.

There are three climatic zones—the Adriatic with hot and dry summers and temperate and rainy winters, the mountain zone with short and cool summers and long winters with heavy snowfall, and the Pannonian zone with continental climate marked by hot summers and cold winters.

Brief history: The Illyrians and Celts first settled the territory of present-day Yugoslavia, while the Greeks established a number of their colonies on the Adriatic coast.

The Romans conquered the area in the 1st century B.C. and turned it into their province named Illyria. Five centuries later, when the Roman Empire split into two parts, Illyria was divided between Rome and Byzantium.

Slav tribes settled in the region in the first half of the 7th century, having moved there from present-day Poland and the Ukraine. These tribes absorbed the Illyrians and the Celts, except those who found refuge in the mountains. The division between northern and southern Slavs occurred when Germans settled in what is today Austria and the Hungarians occupied Pannonia in the 9th century.

The Slav tribes were engaged in communal agriculture until the 11th century, when class differences emerged, based on the private tenure of land.

The almost constant struggle against the Byzantines, Franks, Venetians, Hungarians and other invaders led to the establishment of tribal alliances and the constitution of mediaeval states, such as Serbia, the independent state of Bosnia (in the 13th century), or the autonomous republic of Dubrovnik which alone survived from the 14th century until the beginning of the 19th century as a state created by the southern Slavs (Croats) and which in its time had been an important, free and flourishing centre of sea-borne trade with its own and original culture.

Turkish rule over almost the entire territory of today's Yugoslavia was established at the beginning of the 14th century and lasted until the beginning of the present century.

The revolutionary movements in Europe at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries, the advance of capitalism, the emergence of an organized working-class movement and the process of formation of nations were all factors which influenced the struggle of the peoples of present-day Yugoslavia for their national liberation, social and economic progress and statehood.

As early as in 1878 Montenegro and Serbia, which had won their freedom, were granted international recognition of their national independence, and in an alliance with Greece and Bulgaria defeated Turkey in the Balkan War of 1912. As a result of their defeat, the Turks had to withdraw from the rest of the territory they still occupied on the Balkan Peninsula.

The Central Powers did not view favourably the consolidation and the unification process of the Balkan nations. The assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne in Sarajevo in 1914 was used by the Hapsburg monarchy as a pretext for declaring war on Serbia, which marked the beginning of World War I.

In 1915, groups of emigres from the Austrian-occupied territories established a Yugoslav Committee, which intensively worked for their country's independence. On December 1 of that year it proclaimed the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes as the common state of these nations. However, the proposed objective was not achieved due to the government's lack of interest in solving the national problem.

The Great October Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917 had a strong impact on the peoples of Yugoslavia. The Yugoslav Communist Party (YCP) was founded in 1919 by the revolutionary sectors of the Social Democratic parties in the country, and since its foundation enjoyed broad popular support. This made it finish third in municipal elections and later to win 59 seats in the Constituent Assembly (i.e., 14% of all the seats).

At the end of 1920, the government banned the Communist Party and thus forced it underground.

Following a coup d'etat in 1929, the Yugoslav king established an absolute dictatorship. He prohibited the trade unions, carried out large-scale arrests and had many Communists murdered, while at the same time forcing into exile opponents of pan-Serbian hegemony. The name of the country was changed to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Under these conditions the YCP grew in strength as an important factor in the resistance against the pro-fascist regime. When Josip Broz Tito, the Organizational Secretary of the YCP and other members of the party's Central Committee returned to the country in the middle of 1936, after having worked abroad, a process of consolidation and strengthening of the party was initiated and lasted until 1940.

In 1937, Tito assumed the leadership of the YCP and a new Central Committee was formed. The course of events in the world and in Europe in particular made the YCP and the Union of Communist Youth begin in the middle of 1938 training in the the use of weapons and study of military tactics.

In an attempt to form an alliance between the Serbian bourgeoisie and the Croatian Agrarian Party, the Yugoslav government decided to accede to the Tripartite Pact of the Axis powers on March 25, 1941. It acted under strong pressure from Germany, which wanted to make Yugoslavia an ally in its war plans. One day before, the YCP appealed to the people and warned them against this act of treason. The situation grew even more untenable for the government, which was unable to resist popular pressure in the form of strikes and demonstrations.

On March 27 a group of pro-Western officers, led by General Dusan Simovic, overthrew the government and installed Peter II Karadjordjevic on the throne.

Ten days later, German, Italian and Bulgarian troops invaded Yugoslavia. The military hierarchy, most of them corrupt collaborators with the fascists, surrendered without putting up resistance. Only the Yugoslav Communist Party had taken steps to launch a resistance struggle and mobilized volunteers to fight the invaders. The king and his government fled into exile.

The Axis powers dismembered Yugoslavia and divided most of its territory among German, Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria.

On June 27, 1941, the Central Committee of the YCP, which had already begun to make preparations for waging a guerilla war, formed a General Stafff of Guerilla Units for the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia, which was headed by Tito. The order for an armed uprising was issued on July 4, 1941. Armed actions took place throughout the country by people of all the nationalities. The first regular military unit—the First Proletarian Brigade—was constituted at the end of 1941. Organs of the people's power—Committees of People's Liberation—were being established as the truest revolutionary expression of the socio-political orientation of the uprising.

The royal government in exile, which had its headquarters in London, was opposed from the very beginning to the armed struggle of the people and created inside Yugoslavia units of *cbetniks* under the command of General Mihajlovic, whom it appointed Minister of War. The *cbetniks* collaborated with the occupation forces and fought against the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

On November 26 and 27, 1942, the Constituent Assembly of the Anti-fascist Council of National Liberation was held and elected the members of the Council as the supreme political representative body of the movement. It is also known as the Anti-fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ). Its basic task was the organization of the rear and mobilization of the people in the liberated areas. Later, National Anti-fascist Councils were established in the individual republics.

AVNOJ held its second session in the Bosnian town of Jajce on November 29 and 30, 1943, and appointed Tito Marshal of Yugoslavia. The Teheran Conference was being held at the same time, at which the Allied powers decided to recognize the People's Liberation Army of Yugoslavia and to provide it with support and assistance. By the end of 1944, the people's forces had liberated Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro, as well as Dalmatia.

The Red Army, in co-ordination with the Yugoslav high command, entered Serbia and in a combined operation with the People's Liberation Army liberated Belgrade on October 20, 1944. Subsequently the Yugoslav army liberated the rest of the country in mopping-up operations against the occupiers, which ended on May 15, 1945.

The AVNOJ presidium proposed that Tito should form a united Yugoslav government which would be recognized by the Allies and the neutral states.

In August 1945 AVNOJ held its Third Session in Belgrade, which was supplemented by members of the last pre-war parliament who had not compromised themselves by collaboration or otherwise. This AVNOJ session turned itself into a Provisional National Assembly, and on November 11, elections were held for members of a Constituent Assembly. That body held its first session on November 29, at which it proclaimed the People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. A constitution was promulgated on January 31, 1946. This was followed by the enactment of the constitutions on the individual republics.

A Constitutional Act was proclaimed in 1953 and a new constitution entered into effect in April 1963, which changed the name of the country to the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia, consisting of the republics of Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Bosnia-Hercegovina and Serbia. The latter includes two autonomous territories—Kosovo and Vojvodian.

Throughout this period, President Josip Broz Tito played an active and distinguished role both on the domestic political scene and in the international arena, until his death on May 4, 1980.

The death of the Yugoslav leader evoked profound sorrow in Yugoslavia as well as the rest of the world.

At home President Tito took part in practically all the important events happening in his country. The 11th Congress of the League of Yugoslav Communists, held from June 20 to 23, 1978, was one of the last major events of this kind at which Tito was present.

Yugoslavia played host in recent years to a number of important international meetings. These included the Second Interparliamentary Conference for European Security and Co-operation (1975), the follow-up meeting of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (1977) and the UNESCO General Conference in 1980.

As for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Belgrade has hosted besides the First Summit Conference in 1961 other important meetings of the non-aligned countries. These included the Ministerial Meeting of the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries in 1977, the first Conference of the Broadcasting Organizations of the Non-Aligned Countries in 1977 and the Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Countries in 1978.

Economy: The Yugoslav economy is based on a system under which groups of workers themselves control the production and distribution process, and decide on the conditions and results of their work for which they use means of production that are the property of society as a whole.

The lowest element of this system is known as the Basic Organization of Associated Labour (BOAL), and it is there where workers directly exercise their right of self-management.

A system of delegation is in effect, under which each BOAL elects delegates to a works assembly, which, in turn, elects delegates to assemblies of socio-political assemblies (territorial communities, municipalities), from these to superior assemblies all the way up to the Federal Assembly of the Socialist Federative Republic of Yugoslavia.

Yugoslavia's national currency is the dinar, whose rate of exchange at the beginning of 1981 was 28.5 per U.S. dollar.

In 1978 Yugoslavia's GNP amounted to 620,000,000,000 dollars. According to statistical data from the same year, the Yugoslav foreign-trade turnover was 21,375,000,000 dollars, and the country's principal trading partners have been the Soviet Union, West Germany, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Iraq, the United States and others.

Yugoslav trade and economic organizations maintain commercial contacts with more than 110 countries, while on the inter-state level Yugoslavia has trade agreements with about 100 countries. It is not a member of the CMEA or the EEC, although it has relations with both economic communities and has a special status in the CMEA.

Yugoslav industrial production is 15 times greater than in 1939, due to large investments made into the construction of new industrial plants and modernization of the existing production capacity.

In 1978 Yugoslav industry turned out 254,000 motor-cars, 50,000 tractors, 15,166 lorries, 523,000 bicycles, 687,000 refrigerators, 449,000 television sets, 398,000 washing machines and many other goods.

The mining industry produced in the same year 39,000 tons of lignite, 4,076,000 tons of petroleum, 117,000 tons of lead, 195,000 tons of copper, 5 tons of gold, 200,000 tons of aluminium, as well as other mineral products. Cement output amounted to 8,700,000 tons and that of steel to 3,452,000 tons.

About 89,600 sq.km (i.e., more than a third of the country) are cultivable land, of which 23,600 sq.km are used for growing maize, Yugoslavia's main agricultural product. In 1977 the production of maize was 9,870,000 tons. 3,034,000 tons of potatoes were also produced, as well as other crops.

Tourism is an important source of foreign-exchange earnings, just as are remittances sent home by Yugoslavs working abroad. Income from tourism amounted in 1980 to 1,500,000,000 dollars.

Government: Yugoslavia has a federal system of government. The Republican Assembly is the supreme organ of power with respect to the rights and duties of the Federation. It is made up of the Federal Council and the Council of the Republics and Autonomous Regions.

In the Federal Council each republic is represented by 30 delegates, while the autonomous regions each have 20 delegates. In the Council of the Republics and Autonomous Regions the former each have 12 delegates and the latter 8.

Although there is no strict definition of competence between the two councils as regards their tasks, it may be said that the Federal Council is concerned with socio-political matters, while the Council of the Republics and Autonomous Regions deals with socio-economic problems. Each council has a chairman and a vice-chairman, whose term of office —as of all the delegates—is four years.

The Federal Assembly itself has a president, five vice-presidents, a secretary-general and an assistant secretary-general.

Yugoslavia's Presidency is a collective body of one representative from each of the republics and autonomous regions. Its chairman and vice-chairman serve for a term of one year on a rotation basis according to the individual republics and autonomous regions.

The members of this presidential body are elected for a term of five years. Their duties include representation of Yugoslavia at home and abroad, the supreme command and control of the armed forces at times of peace and war, security of the state as provided for in the constitution, appointment of ambassadors and envoys, receipt of credentials of foreign envoys, dispatch of letters of ratification of international agreements and conventions, appointment, promotion and demotion of general officers and admirals, award of state orders and decorations and granting of pardon for crimes stipulated by the federal laws. After the death on May 4, 1980, of President Josip Broz Tito, who had held the office without limitation placed on its term, the collective presidency exercises all the rights and duties Tito did.

The Federal Executive Council is the executive organ of the Assembly and has approximately the same duties as cabinets in other countries. It has a chairman, five vice-chairmen and ten members. There are seven federal secretariats and ten federal committees (ministries).

Armed forces: The armed forces are composed of the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) and a Territorial Defence Force—a broadly based body of armed resistance. The Yugoslav President also serves as the chairman of the National Defence Council.

The Territorial Defence Force is uniformly organized throughout the country and is made up of combat and service units which would be joined by the militia in case of war. The Defence Force units are formed by communities, provinces and republics and would include in the case of combat regular servicemen assigned to these units and volunteers. Territorial Defence units established by workers' organizations are made up of workers employed in the respective enterprises who are not serving in units set up by the communities.

Organizations: Yugoslavia's most important political and mass organizations are the League of Communists of Yugoslavia (LCY), the Socialist Alliance of Working People, the League of Trade Unions, the Union of Associations of Veterans of the People's Liberation War, and the Youth League.

The League of Communists of Yugoslavia adopted its present name at the sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in 1952. As the principal champion and bearer of political activity, the LCY is responsible for the protection and continued development of the achievements of the socialist revolution and of the socialist self-management relations. Any citizen over 18 years of age who is ready to respect and implement its programme and statutes may become a member of the LCY on the recommendation of an LCY organization or of a self-management body. The supreme organ of the LCY is its Congress, which must be held every four years. Between congresses the duties are carried out by the LCY Central Committee and its Presidium. The chairman of the Presidium (of the Central Committee) is elected for a term of one year.

The League of Trade Unions strives for the realization of the social relations involved in the system of self-management and makes a decisive contribution to the social reproduction effort. It safeguards the role played by the working class in the areas of economic relations and management of social affairs. There are five federal trade unions—the Union of Transport and Communications Workers, the Union of Construction Workers and the Union of Public Service Workers.

The Socialist Alliance was founded during the liberation war by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and has continued functioning in the process of socialist construction as a broad, voluntary and democratic front of workers and other citizens and, in particular, of all the organized socialist forces in the country. It is involved in the work of the organs of power and control of the self-management organizations and communities, as well as in the work of self-management and public officials. Its structure extends from the federal to the community levels.

Culture, education and sports: The people of Yugoslavia, whose cultural traditions date back to Antiquity, have assimilated the cultures of ancient Greece and Rome, Byzantium, Europe and the Orient. They created a new synthesis of these cultural traditions and at the same time developed a popular culture reflected in works of great originality.

Between the two world wars the cultural manifestations of Yugoslavia, then an underdeveloped and mostly agrarian country, lacked a systematic promotion and suffered from fragmentation. The bourgeois state paid no attention whatsoever to the development of the national cultures or of the individual national groups in the country. Nevertheless, there did emerge outstanding artists, who succeeded in gaining prestige thanks to their determination and talent.

The war for people's liberation inspired the revolutionary zeal of the peoples of Yugoslavia and initiated a cultural revival. In the midst of the fighting a new concept of culture was born and developed. Groups of poets, actors, journalists, musicians, scientists and educational workers toured the military units to promote different manifestations and expressions of art. Many of them both fought in the battles for liberation of their country and worked as promoters of culture.

After the liberation the new state assumed the role of promoter of the process of social transformation, including the field of culture.

Social, technical and natural sciences developed, and the individual national cultures were given the scope of their fullest advancement under conditions of complete equality before the law.

The new constitution adopted in 1974 provided for different forms of public involvement in the formulation of cultural policy. The central factors in this respect are cultural communities, where artists and cultural, scientific and educational workers adopt programmes of cultural development and decide on investments into the financing of cultural activities jointly with representatives of society and of social organizations. The constitution stipulates that a small number of members of these communities must be representatives of labour organizations.

Education is based on a uniform system which begins at the lowest level with a primary school of eight years and is topped by university and graduate education. In between are special schools, secondary and vocational schools, as well as other types of intermediary and secondary educational facilities. The system is supplemented with vocational and other schools designed for adult education. Socio-political communities (townships, provinces and the republics) and labour organizations set up and maintain different schools and educational facilities. All education is free.

In 1978 there were in Yugoslavia 13,188 elementary schools with a total of 2,831,480 pupils and 131,547 teachers. There were also 450 secondary schools of general education, 528 schools for training skilled workers, 742 technical and vocational schools 49 teacher-training and art schools at the elementary level, and other educational institutions. There are 18 universities and other higher educational establishments in Yugoslavia.

In 1978, 10,519 book titles were published in Yugoslavia in the total edition of 56,660,000 copies.

According to available data, there are 9,550 sports organizations in Yugoslavia with a total membership of 1,066,331, pursuing 40 sports.

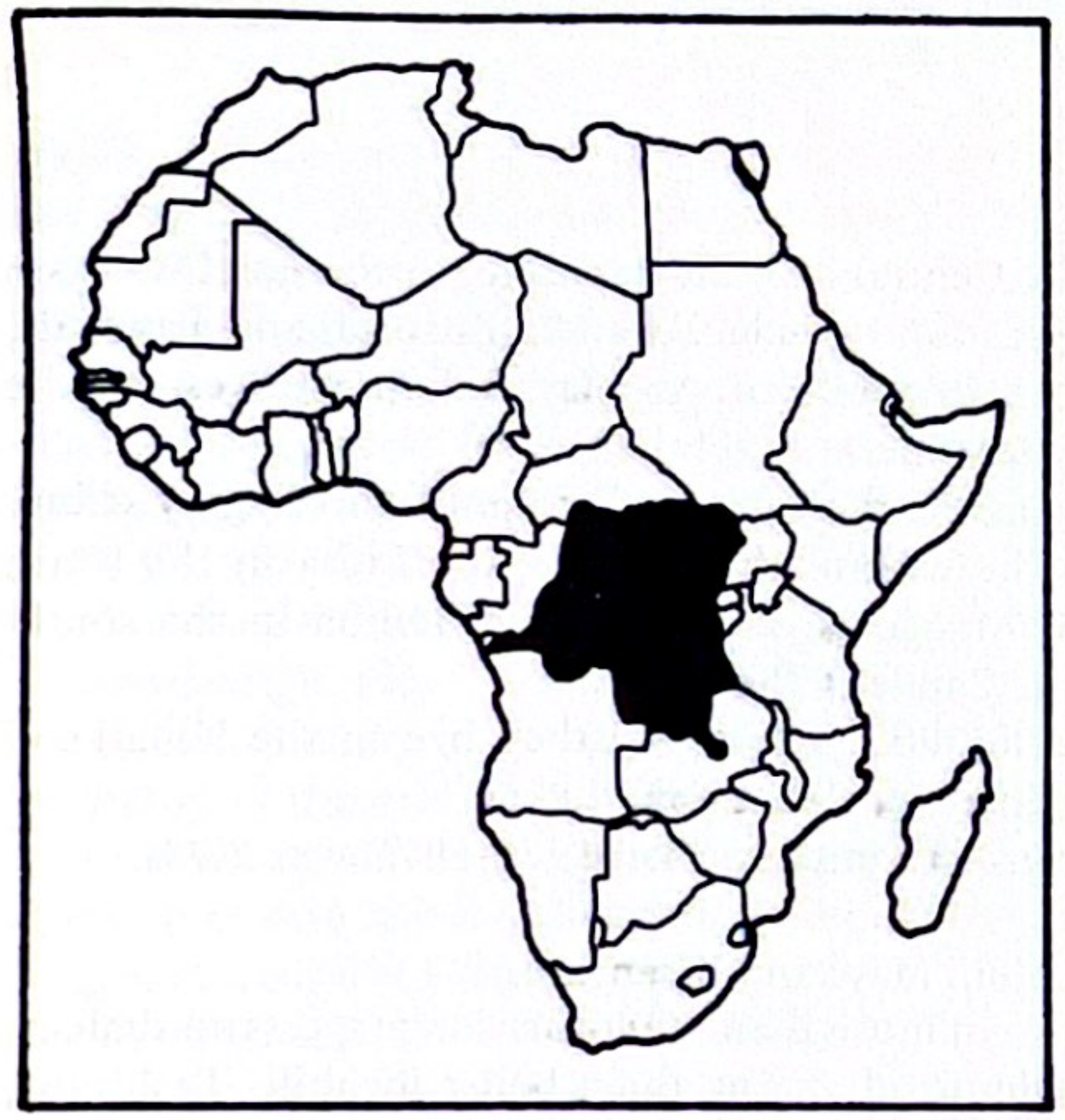
The most popular sport is football. Besides teams of footballers playing just for fun, there are 2,500 football clubs in the country with 110,000 registered players. All of them compete in the most popular championship in the country, the Yugoslav Cup. When village, factory, school, university and army teams are included in the total, there are some 20,000 football teams in Yugoslavia with almost 500,000 players. Other sports enjoying popularity are water-polo, basketball volleyball and boxing.

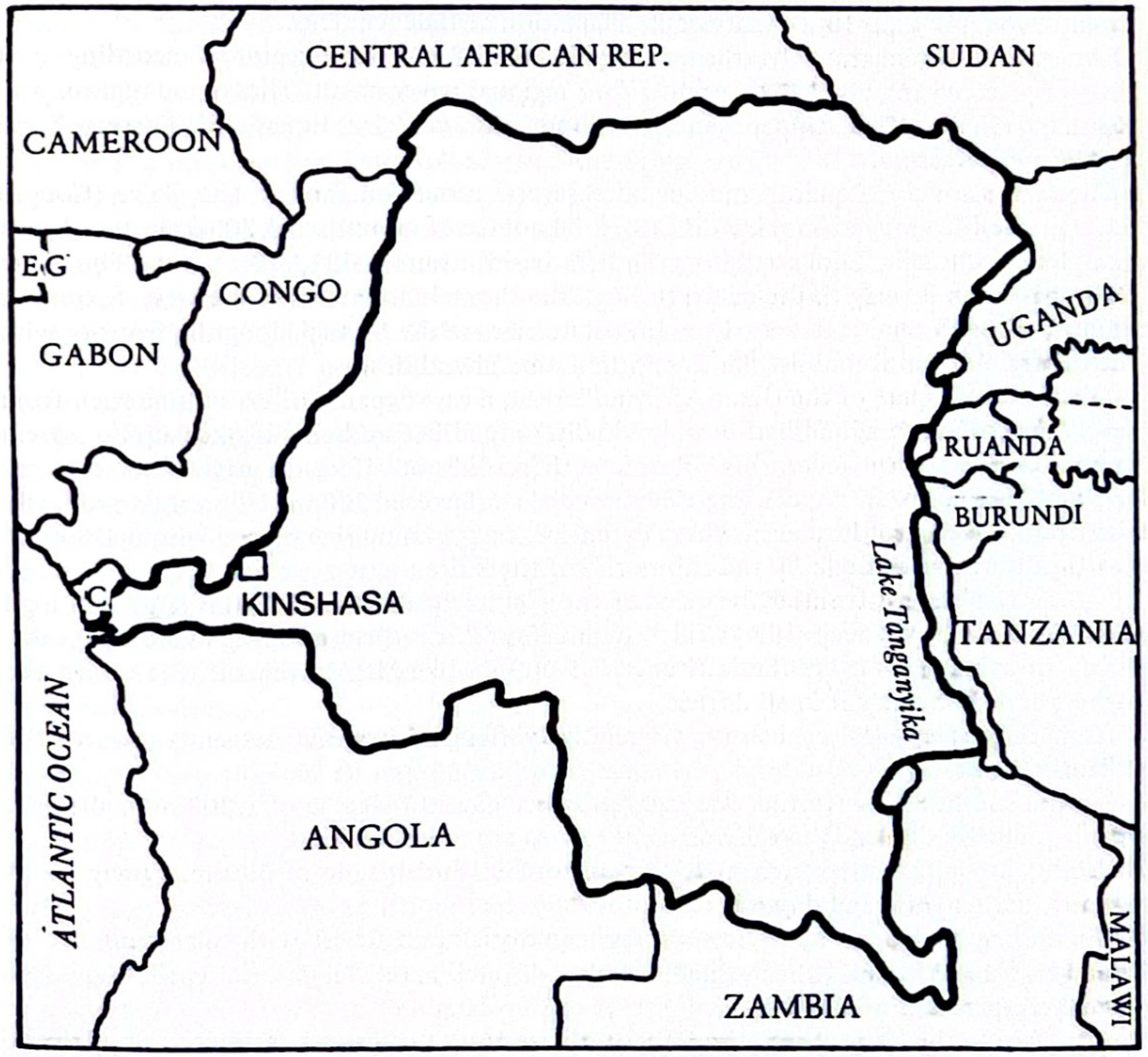
Public health: According to the latest figures, the average death rate is half of the pre-war rate, while the infant morality rate has dropped to less than a third. The average life expectancy exceeds 67 years.

According to the latest available statistics, Yugoslavia had, in 1977, 267 hospitals with the total capacity of 130,135 beds. The number of doctors in 1978 was 22,173, which means the average of one doctor for every 990 inhabitants.

Religion: The largest religious community is that of the Serbian Orthodox Church, followed by Roman Catholics, Moslems and the Macedonian Orthodox Church, besides religious groups of minor significance. There is a separation of the church from the state, but the individual churches are free to engage in their religious rites and activities. The exploitation of religion and the religious communities for political ends is constitutionally prohibited.

ZAIRE





Official name: Zaire.

Area: 2,345,409 sq.km.

Borders: In the north Zaire borders on the Central African Republic, in the north-west on the People's Republic of the Congo, in the east on Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania, in the south on Zambia and the People's Republic of Angola, and in the west on the Atlantic Ocean along the country's only coastline.

Population: 24,410,000 inhabitants. The main ethnic groups are Bantu and Pygmy tribes. The Bantu tribes include the Congo in the west of the country, the Luba in the south central part, the Lunda in the south, the Mongo in the centre, the Bemba in the south-east, the Kwango in the south-west and the Zande in the north.

There are only between 80,000 and 100,000 Pygmies and they live in the Kibali and Ituri forests, as well as in the area of the Kivu and Tanganyika Lakes.

The average annual rate of population growth in the period 1970-1977 was 2.7%.

Capital: Kinshasa.

Principal towns: Kananga, Lubumbashi, Mbuji Mayi and Kisangani.

Languages: French is the official language, but more than 400 other languages and dialects are spoken in the country, the most widespread among them being Swahili, Tashiluba, Lingala and Kikongo.

Public holidays: June 30, Day of the Proclamation of Independence.

Geography: Administratively, the country is divided into nine regions (according to a division decreed in July 1972), each with a regional government. These nine regions are: Kinshasa, Shaba, Kivu, Upper Zaire, Bandundu, Lower Zaire, Equatorial, Eastern Kasai and Western Kasai.

Zaire lies on the Equator and includes several mountain ranges. The Zaire (Congo) River is the fifth longest in the world. Its total course of more than 4,700 km runs almost completely through Zaire's territory and its basin covers 3,691,000 sq. km. The Zaire River passes on its way to the ocean through the Crystal Mountains in the west, forming a number of rapids and cataracts. Its main tributaries are the Ubangi along the frontier with the Central African Republic, the Kasai, the Lomami and others.

Zaire forms a part of the Great African Plateau, a vast expanse of crystalline rock from the Primary Period, which had been gradually eroded before being broken up by a great tectonic upheaval. However, this volcanic activity did not affect the east of the country and the Zaire basin. In the east the elevation does not exceed 500 m. The terrain gradually rises from the east to the south, where extensive craggy mountain ranges of about 1,000 m in altitude are cut through by the tributaries of the Zaire.

Along the eastern frontier the reief of the country greatly varies from large and high mountain massifs to deep valleys filled with lakes. This is the area of high volcanic peaks, which in some cases exceed an altitude of 5,000 m, like Mt. Ruwenzori (5,120 m), the highest crystalline massif in all Africa.

Generally speaking, the country is relatively flat and its relief descends towards the Atlantic Ocean.

In the south, Shaba (former Katanga) province covers a plateau of 1,000 m in altitude, which gradually descends to the north.

The central plateau, which at Kisangani reaches the altitude of 600 m, slowly drops towards the Atlantic and down to 295 m.

Extending between the valleys is the equatorial rain forest with an abundance of mahogany, baobab and other valuable timber. The climate is equatorial with an average annual temperature of 28°C.

Apart from the Zaire River (the Congo), the country possesses a vast network of rivers, which provide one of the principal means of transportation. It also has a number of lakes, the largest being those of Mobutu Sese Seko (the former Lake Albert), Amin Dada (the former Lake Edward), Kivu and Tanganyika.

Brief history: The Pygmies are considered to have been the original inhabitants of the Congo Basin, arriving there in the Stone Age. Between the 10th and 14th centuries successive invasions of Bantu peoples forced the Pygmies to find refuge in the forests. Different Bantu tribes settled in the area and established a number of kingdoms.

It was the Portuguese who discovered the Congo (Zaire) estuary in 1482 and entered into contact with the Bantu Bakongo kingdom, whose king Manikongo had his capital in Moanzakongo. HIs kingdom, called Kongo, was a state of the Sudanese type, which had been founded by a group of invaders who had reached the area from the south-east probably at the end of the 14th or the beginning of the 15th century.

In 1490 the Portuguse sent to the area their first missionaries, accompanied by masons, carpenters and other craftsmen, who converted the Bakongo to Catholicism and built the kingdom's capital with stone.

Although slavery existed in the Kongo kingdom the capture of large numbers of slaves for the Portuguese plantations in Brazil aroused the Africans' opposition. The Portuguese dispatched Paulo Dias de Neveis in 1575 to suppress the opposition, and a war of conquest was launched against the African peoples. The Bakongo went to war with the Portuguese in 1650, but their defeat weakened them to the point where they were no longer able to maintain the internal unity of their kingdom, which then began to fall apart.

The 19th century saw the beginning of a systematic exploration of the African continent. One of the most outstanding explorers was the Scotsman David Livingstone. The fame he had won inspired an American newspaper publisher to send a young war correspondent, Henry Morton Stanley, to meet with Livingstone. Stanley left in 1871 to search for Livingstone and eventually found him at Lake Tanganyika. On his return to Europe in 1878, Stanley met with a representative of King Leopold II of Belgium.

Earlier, in 1876, Leopold II founded the International African Association with the assistance of different capitalists with the aim of surveying and exploiting the riches of Central Africa.

In 1881 Great Britain occupied Egypt and thereby violated her agreements with France, which retaliated by invading Tunisia and by having her colonizer Brazza conclude agreements with the tribal chiefs in the Makoko area, whereby the French acquired an important position in the Congo Basin. This move affected Portugal's interests in its old settlements in Angola, and Britain became concerned about freedom of trade in the Congo Basin. These differences between the colonial powers were exploited by Leopold II for attaining his objectives at the Berlin Conference in Decemer 1884, which accelerated the partition of Africa. The German Chancellor Bismarck supported the Belgian king against his British and French rivals.

The Treaty of Berlin was to guarantee the freedom of navigation on the Niger and Congo for the ships of all nations and proclaimed the establishment of the Congo Free State, in effect the property of Leopold II of Belgium.

The Belgian colonial presence in the Congo was one of the darkest periods in the country's history, characterized by the plunder of its natural resources by foreign corporations, the large-scale use of forced labour and oppressive taxation.

Thousands of Congolese died during the construction of the 388 km-long railway from Kinshasa (then Leopoldville) to the southern port of Matadi between 1890 and 1898. The practices of the colonial administration prompted the flight of the native population or provoked its uprising. One of the best-known insurrections was the Batatele revolt.

In order to perpetuate his domination of the Congo, the Belgian king formed an army known as the *Force Publique*, consisting of several thousand Africans and commanded by Belgian officers. Its main purpose was to suppress the native rebellions.

An investigating commission admitted in 1904 that during the first 15 years of colonial rule, 3,000,000 Africans had died of illness and maltreatment.

A campaign was waged at that time abroad against the colonial policy pursued by Leopold II. Moreover, at the end of the 19th century the Belgian king was unable to repay to the Belgian state a loan of 25,000,000 Belgian francs, granted to him in 1890. Under its terms, the loan was to have been repaid within ten years, otherwise the colony would pass to the Belgian state. Leopold II delayed the cession of the colony until 1908 and succeeded in securing his interests through the Societe general Belge.

When the colony passed to the Belgian state under the name of the Belgian Congo, its colonial structure was characterized by direct administration. A law adopted on October 18, 1908, and known as the Colonial Code, provided the foundation for future colonial legislation and also formed the basis for the domination, exploitation and discrimination of the Congolese.

What was being called paternalism was nothing but a demagogic policy employed by the Belgian colonial power in an attempt to cover up the cruelty of colonial exploitation.

This exploitation was intensified after World War I, but at the same time several opposition movements of a religious nature came into being, the major one led by Simon Kibangu. Among its Messianic doctrines, Kibanguism also spread ideas of Congolese nationalism. Kibangu was persecuted, imprisoned and sentenced to death, but eventually the death penalty was commuted to life imprisonment. He died 30 years later, in 1951, still in prison.

The political religious movements spread throughout the country and frequently the Congolese rose up in arms. One uprising, which had broken out at Sankutu in 1919, lasted almost 24 months. For many years a number of districts in Kivu province refused to obey the colonial authorities. The Belgians had to launch major military operations in order to suppress the rebels, who opposed the colonial domination from their stronghold on Mt. Mitumba. By 1923 the colonialists succeeded in "pacifying" the Congo for at least some time.

However, new uprisings broke out between 1931 and 1936, in the period when the crisis of capitalism had reached its climax. In 1931 plantation workers at Kuango, members of the Pende tribe, left work and fled to the forest. The situation became so tense that an officer sent to the area to suppress the rebellion was killed. The uprising spread throughout the Kuango district and the Belgian administration had to reinforce the local garrisons with troops sent from the capital, Leopoldville. In the unequal battle, troops of the Force Publique crushed the rebels in what was a virtual massacre. Hundreds of Congolese were murdered by the soldiers and prisoners were executed without trial in front of women and children. In the same year a large uprising broke out in Kasai, where 4,000 Congolese took up arms in opposition to Belgian domination.

World War II severed the relations between Belgium and the Congo, which had to build some industry in order to produce articles that, because of the war, could not be brought from Europe. The Congo was turned into a source of strategic raw materials for the war industry of the Allied powers.

After the war, faced by the onset of the disintegration of the colonial system, Belgium tried to channel all Congolese nationalist movements in order to prevent the upsurge of radical groups, and in 1948 introduced the Charter of Civil Merits, granted to those whom the colonial administation recognized as having the capacity to carry out some of the duties exercised by Europeans (in 1958 only some 1,500 out of the total of 13,000,000 Congolese held this "Charter").

In 1954 Buisseret was appointed minister for colonies at a time when a Socialist majority government was in power in Belgium. Buisseret introduced an official secular system of education for the Congolese, and while he was in office, new schools were established and construction of housing for the native population was stimulated in the Congo. His policy helped strengthen the protest movement and nationalist consciousness.

Congolese nationalism grew in intensity between 1952 and 1958. In 1955 King Baudouin visited the Congo as a part of a policy aimed at stopping the upsurge of the emancipation movement.

On July 1, 1956, a small group of intellectuals in Leopoldville published a Manifesto of African Consciousness, which was in effect a nationalist programme. Among other things, this document underlined the need for building a new society as a synthesis of African cultural wealth and the true achievements of Western civilization. It called for elimination of the privileges enjoyed by the Europeans and supported the plan of the Belgian professor Vom Bilsen, who called for Congo's independence within 30 years.

Faced by the imminent collapse of colonialism, the Belgians promoted the formation of tribal entities.

On August 23, 1956, the Bakongo Association—ABAKO—which had been founded by Joseph Kasavubu in 1950, called for the right to form political parties. ABAKO sought support from different ethnic groups and aspired to the re-establishment of the ancient Bakongo kingdom.

Another tribal institution created at that time was the Confederation of Tribal Associations (CONAKAT), led by Moise Tshombe and closely tied to the white colonists in Katanga province associated in the Katanga Union Party.

The National Congolese Movement—the MNC—led by Patrice Lumumba came into being in 1958. The MNC was born as a party fighting for independence and calling for the participation of all, irrespective of their ethnic origin.

Faced by the steadily growing demand for independence, the Belgian government tried to steer the independence course slowly and along pacific lines. The Belgians settled in the Congo were opposed to this decision and launched an anti-independence movement, while at the same time stepping up their repressive policy.

For their part, the nationalists united for the first time at a congress of political parties and accelerated their pro-independence drive.

Two important events took place in Africa in 1958, which further radicalized the Congolese nationalist movement. The first event was the first conference of African peoples in Accra, Ghana, and the second one was the statement made by the French President, Charles de Gaulle, in Brazzaville. Disturbances in January 1959 were followed by still greater tension in the Belgian colony.

The government in Brussels ordered the holding of communal elections in the Congo in December 1959, but the position of the nationalist parties caused concern to the Belgians, who felt the need for convening a conference to discuss the situation. The conference met in Brussels from January 20 to February 20, 1960, and was attended by all the Congolese political parties and representatives of the Belgian parliament and government. An outstanding role was played at this "round-table" conference by the leader of the independence forces, Patrice Lumumba, who was in radical opposition to the conciliatory position maintained by some of the tribal groups. The conference set the date for Congo's independence for June 30, 1960. An executive body was formed for the interim period, which was made up of the leaders of the principal political parties and was presided over by a

Governor General. The Western powers made use of that period of tansition to independence for fomenting the ethnic differences in the country and for instigating a virtual civil war.

After a number of fruitless attempts to form a government, a formula was devised and approved at the end of June 1960, with Joseph Kasavubu and Patrice Lumumba at the top of the governmental structure and with a cabinet made up of representatives of different political parties. Joseph Kasavubu became President, Patrice Lumumba the Prime Minister and Minister of Defence and Antoine Gizenga, Justin Bomboko, Tomas Kanza, Pierre Mulele, Kashamure and Mpolo were appointed to individual cabinet posts.

Congo's independence was formally proclaimed in the presence of King Baudouin on June 30, 1960. In his speech on that occasion—in contrast to statements made by King Baudouin and President Kasavubu—Lumumba declared that independence was not a gift from the Belgians but a right won by the Congolese people.

A series of protests by the *Force Publique* five days after the proclamation of independence ended when Belgian officers took command of the Congolese national army. Belgian military forces intervened in the country under the pretext of putting down the mutiny of the *Force Publique*, but their real objective was to spur the secession of Katanga province.

On July 11, 1960, Moise Tshombe, the governor of Katanga, announced in the provincial capital of Elizabethville (today's Lubumbashi) the secession of the province and the formation of a Katangese government. Tshombe provided a screen for the true engineers of the secession, Westerm, chiefly Belgian, corporations operating in Katanga.

At the request of the Lumumba government in the middle of July 1960, the U.N. Security Council sent U.N. troops to the Congo in order to put an end to the secession of Katanga and to the Belgian military intervention. However, instead of helping the Lumumba government and the U.N. troops, the Moroccan General Kettani favoured the fractionalist element and fought Lumumba.

In spite of this difficult situation, the Lumumba government put into effect a number of measures designed to spur education, the economic life of the country and democracy. In its external relations, the government pursued an independent policy and established relations with a number of African countries, with the Soviet Union and with other socialist states.

Albert Kalondji, the head of the Luba-inhabited Kasai province in the south imitated Tshombe and proclaimed the secession of his province and the formation of a mining state. Several days later Tshombe and Kalondiji formed a federation of their two secssionist states.

Under Western pressure, Kasavubu announced on September 5, 1960, the dismissal of Lumumba from his post as Prime Minister. On the other hand Lumumba dismissed Kasavubu from his post. The parliament refused to accept either dismissal and thus, although completely disrupted, the Kasavubu-Lumumba government continued in effect.

A few days later Colonel Joseph Desire Mobutu assumed the command of the Congolese National Army. On September 14, 1960, he set up a Council of Commissioners and thereby formed what was in practice a separate government.

The next day, in full agreement with the U.N. command, Colonel Mobutu arrested Lumumba and his two aides, and turned them over to Tshombe secessionist troops, which murdered them on January 17, 1961.

Years later, an investigating commission of the U.S. Congress disclosed that the CIA had planned Lumumba's murder.

Kasavubu appointed as the new Premier Joseph Ileo, who launched a campaign to win

international recognition for his government.

Opposing the Ileo government, Antoine Gizenga, the leader of the African Solidarity Party (PSA) and former Minister in the Lumumba government, headed a government which was established in Stanleyville by followers of the late Lumumba. The Gizenga government, which had been recognized as Congo's legitimate government by some 20 countries, extended its control over the eastern part of the country.

Thus, at the end of 1960 three governments and four powers characterized the Congolese political map: the Kasavubu-Ileo government in Leopoldville, the secessionist Tshombe government in Katanga, and the revolutionary Gizenga government in Stanleyville, while the fourth, real power was that of Mobutu at the head of the Congolese army.

Ileo resigned on August 1, 1961. The new Premier, Cyrille Adoula, who had been appointed by Kasavubu, launched a campaign for the unification of the country and succeeded in winning over Gizenga, who became Vice-Premier in his government. However, shortly thereafter. in February 1962, Gizenga was dismissed and arrested.

At the beginning of 1963 the secessionist movement in Katanga was defeated by U.N. troops and Tshombe left the country.

In the meantime, the revolutionary forces turned to guerilla fighting. Two guerilla fronts, led by Pierre Mulele and Gaston Soumaliot, kept the Kasavubu-Adoula troops in check.

In June 1964 Tshombe was invited back to the Congo by Kasavubu to replace Adoula as Premier. However, the differences existing between Kasavubu and Tshome reached their climax at the end of 1965, when in October Kasavubu dismissed Tshombe and appointed Evariste Kimba to form a new cabinet. Kimba tried to enter into negotiation with the guerilla forces and to carry out certain changes in the government. However, a month later, in November 1965, Mobutu at the command of the Congolese National Army, carried out a coup and proclaimed himself President.

A period of economic prosperity helped the Mobutu government attain certain stability, although there were several plots to overthrow him in the months following his seizure of power. The most prominent among these movements was the so-called Pentecostal Plot, which ended with the execution of its four leaders, among them the former Premier Evariste Kimba.

Guerilla activities rapidly spread and in 1964 the Mulele and Soumaliot groups stepped up the fighting, gaining control over two-thirds of the country. However, with the help of mercenaries recruited in South Africa and Europe, troops of the Congolese National Army attacked the guerilla centres, and after some bitter fighting the guerillas had to disband and leave the country.

In October 1968 the Foreign Minister of the Mobutu government, Justin Bomboko, negotiated in Brazzaville the return of the guerilla leader Pierre Mulele, who was offered full guarantees of freedom on his return home in addition to a ministerial post in the Mobutu cabinet. However, in spite of these guarantees, Mulele was arrested two days after his arrival in Kinshasa and after a mockery of a trial was shot. This event caused a break of relations with the government in Brazzaville, which had acted as mediator between the Mobutu government and Mulele.

A violent repression of student discontent in 1969 resulted in scores of deaths, hundreds of arrests and the closing down of the university in Kinshasa. Moreover, the government ordered the enlistment in the army of more than 3,000 students of that university for a period of two years.

In October 1971 Mobutu's former aides, Victor Nedaka, Justin Bomboko and Alphonse Decas Bangala, were arrested and accused of high treason.

In the same year, the Democratic Republic of Congo was renamed Zaire and its President Mobutu Sese Seko, in keeping with the policy of authenticity, whose lines were set a year earlier at the first congress of the National Revolutionary Movement. Also changed were the European names of all the country's inhabitants, just as all the towns and areas of the country were Africanized.

This policy of authenticity, a confused exaltation of African values, contradicted the government's policy of sell-out of Zaire's natural resources to foreign monopolies. "Zairation", the economic expression of the policy of authenticity, affected only small foreign-owned capital, while the large foreign corporations continued all these years to increase their investments in Zaire.

Although the Zairean government pursued a policy of rapprochement with the member-countries of the OAU and had broken off relations with Israel, its foreign policy followed that of the continent's most reactionary regimes against liberation movements and in favour of the interests of the Western powers.

In 1975 Zaire took part in the aggression against the People's Republic of Angola and served as a base for operations carried out by the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) of Holden Roberto and by white mercenaries, who were trying to deprive the Angolan people of their independence, won under the guidance of their true representative, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), headed by Agostinho Neto.

The ignominious defeat it suffered in Angola further intensified the economic and political crisis of the Mobutu government. In May 1977, an uprising broke out in Shaba province (the former Katanga), which demonstrated the weak position of the Kinshasa regime. Forces of the National Front for the Liberation of the Congo (FNLC), led by Nathaniel Mbumba, occupied a part of the province. The Mobutu government quickly schemed to internationalize the conflict by resorting to such lies as an alleged presence of Cuban soldiers in the area, a fabrication promptly denied by the Cuban government. Vast quantities of weapons were shipped to Kinshasa by Mobutu's Western allies—France, Belgium, the United States, West Germany and others. Confronted by the superiority of interventionist troops—mainly Moroccan soldiers and French and Egyptian pilots—the FNLC forces dispersed.

In the same year, a scandalous contract was disclosed between the Zairean government and the West German OTRAG Corporation, which is made up of the Dornier Company, producing fuselages, the Messerschmidt Company, supplying motors—both are West German —and the French Thompson CFS corporation, which manufactures navigational guidance systems. The contract, which was denounced by the world's progressive countries and organizations, provided for the lease for a period of 24 years of more than 100,000 sq.km of land in Shaba province for the production, testing and storing of missiles—under the guise of peaceful experiments—in exchange for the annual payment of 50,000,000 dollars and weapons for the Zairean army. This contract—one of the most odious in African history gave OTRAG absolute control over the area, including the authority to expel its inhabitants. The establishment of such a base in Shaba province was a serious violation of the sovereignty of the country and of the OAU Charter, and posed a serious threat to African countries, in particular those in the equatorial zone.

In the early months of 1978, a number of events were reported, aimed against the Zairean government. An abortive coup, which was officially reported, resulted in the sentencing to death of 19 persons, five of them in absentia, and the imprisonment of 55 others, most of them members of the military. The repression launched by the government in the first three months of that year reached its climax in a massacre of the population

by the army in the Kwilu area, where some 500 civilians were killed.

The persistent economic crisis in the country became still more acute in May 1978. This development was seized upon by the FNLC fighters who attacked the town of Kolwezi on May 13 with a force of some 4,000 men, as reported in the press. On the same day the Mobutu government, which was unable to control the situation, asked the French government for assistance. The same request was subsequently sent to other countries, including Morocco. When the rebels seized the town of Mutshasha near Kolwezi, the Zaire government began to spread false allegations about the involvement in the events of the People's Republic of Angola. In a statement issued on May 15, the Angolan government resolutely rejected these accusations and denied any ties with the rebellion in Shaba. On May 16 the situation deteriorated for the Kinshasa government, the United States decided to speed up its sale of arms to Zaire. On May 18 the NATO countries, in particular France and Belgium, decided to intervene militarily under the pretext of protection and evacuation of their nationals. On the same day French Foreign Legion paratroops were dropped on Kolwezi and engaged in fighting with the rebel troops.

While the U.S. press published the official Cuban denial of an alleged participation in the conflict, in Washington, President Carter announced the delivery of military equipment worth 17,500,000 dollars to the Zairean government. On May 20 the French Defence Ministry admitted that Kinshasa's accusations of Cuba were false, when it confirmed that French troops had not encountered any Cuban soldiers in Zaire.

The NATO military intervention to save the Mobutu regime became complete on May 18, when the United States provided a number of its C-141 air transports for supplying the French and Belgian troops fighting in Shaba. Other NATO countries supported the operation in other ways—Portugal by agreeing to the refuelling of the planes flying to Zaire on its territory and Great Britain by placing her troops on the alert.

As the conflict in Shaba was under way, a conference was held in Paris of the French-speaking African countries, which was attended by 21 countries. Opposition by many of the progressive governments in the area prevented the formation of a clearly interventionist "inter-African force", which had been proposed at the conference with reference to the situation in Zaire. This French proposal was severely criticized and rejected by the OAU summit conference held several months later in the Sudanese capital of Khartoum.

With the situation in Shaba suppressed, the Belgian troops began their withdrawal from Zaire on May 23, but the French Foreign Legion paratroopers under the command of Colonel Philippe Erulin, notorious for his repressive operations in Algeria, continued to occupy Shaba until June, when Moroccan troops arrived. The Moroccans stayed in the province for a long time.

Early in June Chinese Foreign Minister Huang Hua arrived in Kinshasa to specify the terms of the assistance provided by his country to the Mobutu regime.

In the same month, the envoys of five NATO countries—the United States, France, Great Britain, West Germany and Belgium—met in Paris to discuss the situation in Zaire. In a tacit violation of the self-determination of that African country, this conference agreed on the conditions under which they would provide assistance to Zaire, which further deepened its dependence on the Western powers.

Under the pressure of its critical economic situation, the Zairean government was forced to normalize its relations with Angola. The high cost for Zaire of shipping goods to and from the interior could be alleviated by the use of the Benguela railway in Angola.

After some preliminary contacts, delegations from Zaire and Angola met in Brazzaville, the capital of the People's Republic of Congo in July 1978, in order to discuss matters relating to the re-establishment of mutual relations. The decision to do so was made on

August 21, 1978, during a visit to Zaire by Angola's President Agostinho Neto.

In January and November 1978 and in November 1979 representatives of the principal advanced capitalist countries and of Western banking institutions (with U.S. capital) met in an attempt to solve the crisis in Zaire. The key measures taken included Belgian control of the customs, French control of fiscal matters and control of transportation and energy by other countries. Moreover, the Western countries granted Zaire loans amounting to 334,000,000 dollars in order to even its balance of payments. Thus Zaire came under the control of the International Monetary Fund.

Nevertheless, in June 1980, United Press International reported that Zaire was "Africa's worst economic disaster".

In March 1980 Mobuto made his third trip to China.

In December of that year, Western news agencies disclosed a massacre of youth and school children by Zairean army troops in Kasai province.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the mainstays of the Zairean economy. Of the total area of 234,541,000 hectares, 7,200,000 hectares are used for agricultural production by 78% of the economically active population, which was estimated at 10,000,000 in 1973.

According to FAO figures for 1978, Zaire's agricultural output included 487,000 tons of maize, 26,000 tons of millet, 12,000 tons of barley, 202,000 tons of rice, 321,000 tons of bananas, 163,000 tons of citrus fruit, 167,000 tons of mangoes, 165,000 tons of pineapples, 90,000 tons of coffee, 5,000 tons of cocoa, 10,000 tons of tea, 26,000 tons of cotton seed, 8,000 tons of cotton fibre, 13,000 tons of jute, 339,000 tons of peanuts, 3,000 tons of sesame, and 70,000 tons of palm kernels. Zaire's forests produced 13,690,000 cu.m of timber in 1975, and rubber plantations turned out 27,000 tons of latex in 1978. Zaire's livestock figures for 1978, as reported by the FAO, included 1,145,000 head of cattle, 720,000 sheep, 2,636,000 goats, and 878,000 pigs. The 1978 fish catch was estimated at 100,000 tons. In the same year, Zaire produced 175,000 tons of palm oil.

According to the Mining Annual Review for 1975-1976, Zaire was the world's top producer of cobalt and diamonds, the sixth largest producer of copper, and the ninth largest producer of tin and zinc. It also held 11th place in the output of gold and 12th in the output of cadmium. The following are the production figures for 1978: 392,825 tons of copper, 13,095 tons of cobalt, 186 tons of cadmium, 10,599,000 metric carats of industrial diamonds, 89,000 kg of silver, 2,386 kg of gold, and 6,604,000 barrels of crude petroleum.

The operation and commercial outlet of a major part of Zaire's mining industry are controlled by Western multinational corporations, mainly Belgian-dominated, although officially the production is in the hands of the state. Moreover, major concessions have been granted to other international companies (Sodomiza and SMTF among others) for the extraction and production of non-ferrous metals.

The ore-processing industry, too, is controlled by foreign capital and produced in 1977: 293,000 tons of refined copper, 51,000 tons of zinc, 700 tons of tin, and 137,783 tons of sulphuric acid. In addition, Zaire produced 48,412,000 m of cotton fabrics and 468,000 tons of cement and generated 4,050,000,000 kWh of electric power.

According to available data, Zaire's GNP in 1977 amounted to 5,290,000,000 dollars, the rate of per capita GNP growth was negative—minus 1.4%—in the period 1970-1977, the provisional national budget for 1979 showed a deficit caused by 2,661,960,000 zaires of expenditure and 2,430,062,000 zaires of receipts.

The 1977 balance of trade ended with a surplus due to 930,600,000 zaires worth of exports and 538,000,000 zaires of imports. At the end of 1979 Zaire's foreign-exchange reserves stood at 373,740,000 dollars, but its foreign debt, according to reliable estimates, amounted to 5,000,000,000 dollars.

The national currency is the zaire, whose rate of exchange in February 1980 was 2.026 per U.S. dollar. The inflation rate was 160% in the period 1979-1980.

In spite of its vast riches, which are being squandered by the official bureaucracy, Zaire is finding itself in a dire economic situation which borders on bankruptcy. Assistance is being supplied by a number of industrialized capitalist countries—the very same are exploiting its natural wealth—and the International Monetary Fund. This international organization, which is controlled by the United States, supervises, through the Bank of Zaire, all financial operations of the country.

Government: Zaire has a presidential-type government. Under its 1967 constitution, which was amended in 1974 and 1978, Zaire is a unitary and centralized state. Its President is elected for a term of five or seven years by popular vote and may be re-elected more than once.

The 1978 constitutional amendment produced no basic change. The provisions limiting the President's powers do not apply under the constitution to the Founding President, General Mobutu Sese Seko, the head of the People's Revolutionary Movement (MPR). The Political Bureau of this organization, which consists of 18 members appointed by the President and 18 members elected by popular vote, has vast powers, including the right to nominate the sole candidate for presidential elections, to appoint members of the MPR Congress, and to approve the list of candidates for the Legislative Council.

Legislative authority is vested in the National Legislative Council, which ratifies the decisions taken by the Political Bureau of the MPR.

Executive power is vested in the National Executive Council made up of State Commissioners, who implement the decisions adopted by the Political Bureau.

Under the constitutional provisions the President is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces and the gendarmerie.

Armed forces: After the events in Shaba in 1978, the army was re-organized with the assistance of French, Belgian and Chinese officers. In 1979 the armed forces had 18,500 men serving in the army, 1,000 in the air force, and 1,000 in the navy. There are an additional 35,000 men serving in paramilitary forces.

The 1976 military budget amounted to 164,000,000 dollars, i.e., 18.7% of the national budget. Zaire's main arms suppliers are France, Belgium and the United States.

Organizations: The only legally authorized political party is the Popular Revolutionary Movement (MPR), which is headed by General Mobutu Sese Seko. It is the supreme state body. Established in 1967, the MPR has an immense membership, because all Zaireans become its members at birth. The MPR's governing body is the Political Bureau of 36 members.

There are some clandestine political parties, such as the Congolese National Lumumba Movement (MNC Lumumba), and a number of political organizations in exile.

The sole workers' organization in existence is the official National Union of Zairean Workers (UNTZA), which was founded in 1967 and which has some 150,000 members.

Education and sport: In 1976, there were 3,529,710 pupils attending primary schools, 506,841 pupils attending secondary schools, and 26,300 students were enrolled in university education. Zaire has one university with three campuses—in Kinshasa, Kisangani and Lubumbashi.

In 1975 80% of children of school age attended primary schools, but only 11% of boys and girls in the appropriate age category attended secondary schools.

There is a cultural organization known as the Zaire Cultural Centre, which is involved in the promotion of Bantu culture.

In 1973 Zaire had 13 daily newspapers, 100,000 radio sets (one for every 236 inhabitants), and 7,000 television sets (one for every 3,366 inhabitants), and in 1975 it had 26,274 telephones (one for every 935 inhabitants.

The national sport is football. Although such other sports as boxing are also pursued, popular participation in them is very small.

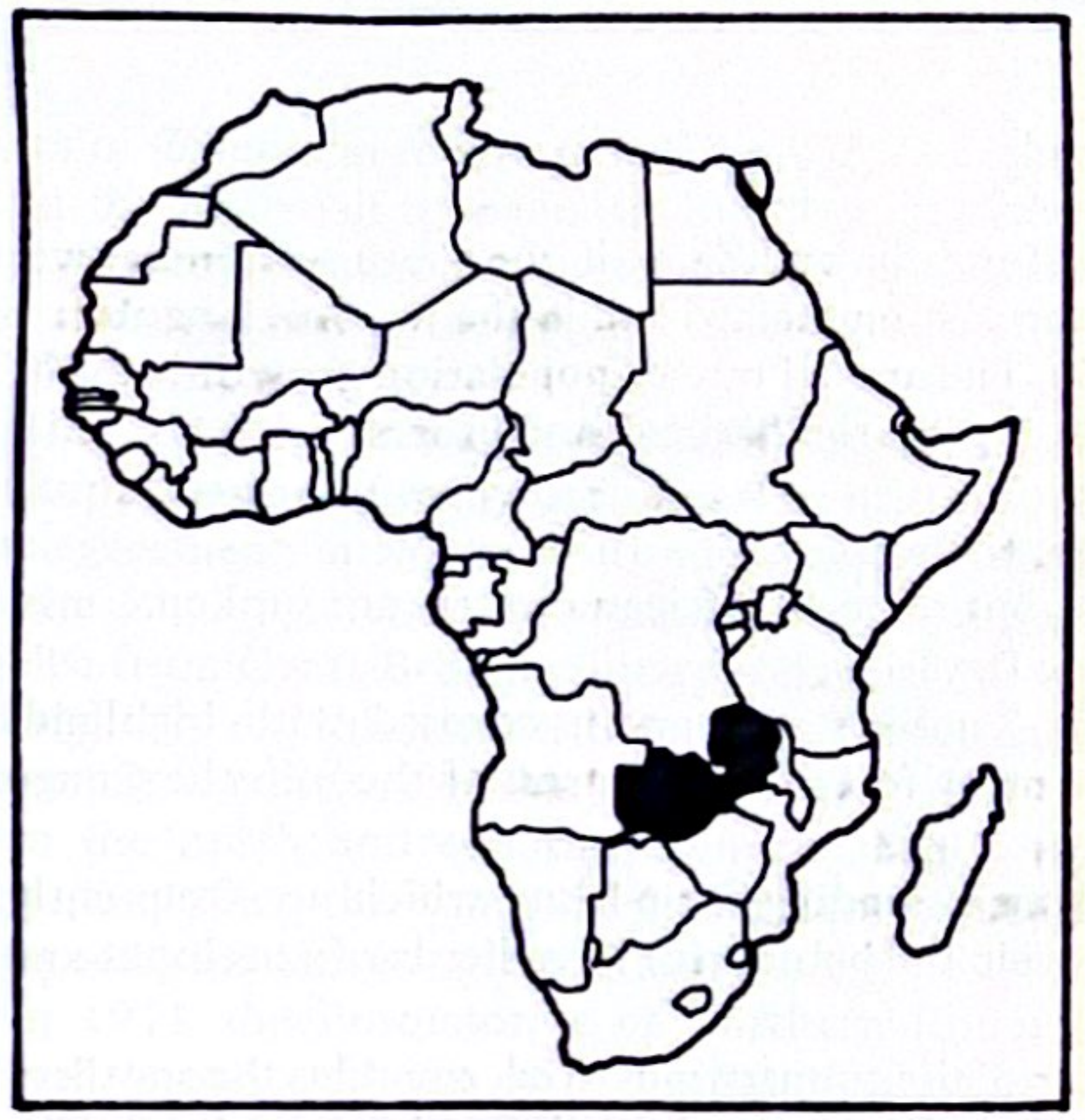
Public health: In 1973 Zaire had 818 doctors (one for every 28,802 inhabitants), and there were only 72,090 hospital beds. The average per capita calorie intake in the period 1972-1974 was 1,848 which is less than the FAO-recommended minimum daily intake of 2,230 calories. The birth rate is 44 per 1,000 inhabitants, while the mortality rate is 20 per 1,000. Average life expectancy in the period 1970-1975 was 41.9 years for men and 45.1 years for women.

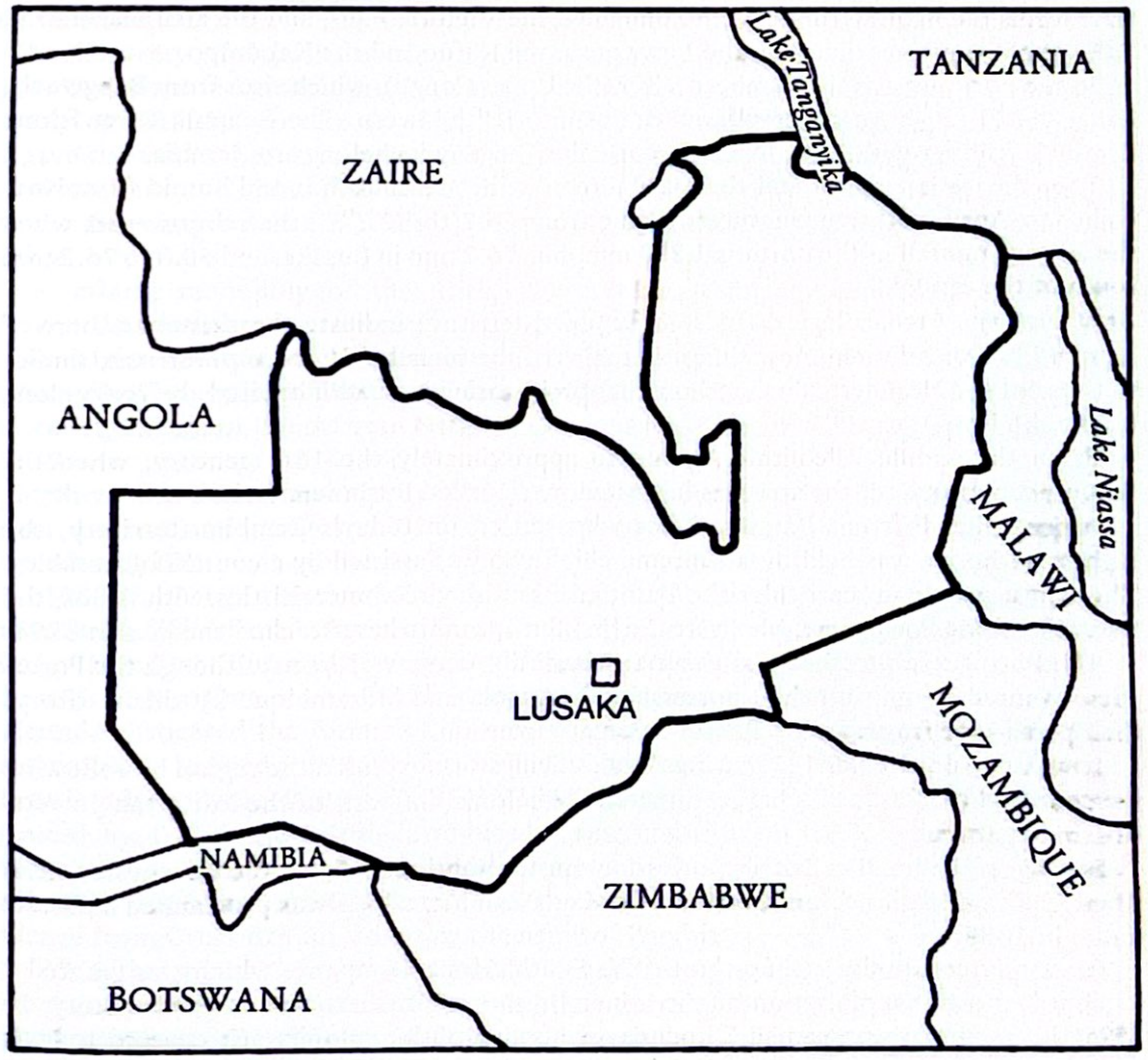
Religion: Approximately half the population practises traditional African cults. The Roman Catholic church has a great following in the country and its hierarchy includes six archbishops. Some years ago the Roman Catholic church ran into problems with the government of President Mobutu, because of its opposition to the so-called policy of "authenticity", which Mobutu had proclaimed.

There also exist such less important religious groups as the Church of Christ of Zaire, the Anglicans and a number of Protestant churches.

There are, in addition, small Moslem and Hebrew communities.

ZAMBIA





Official name: The Republic of Zambia.
Area: 752,600 sq. km.
Borders: In the north Zambia borders on Tanzania and Zaire, in the south on Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia, in the east on Malawi and in the west on Angola.
Population: 5,400,000 inhabitants (1979). The annual rate of population growth is 3.2%. Ethnic groups: the Bemba, the Nyanja, the Tonga, the Barotse and others.
Capital: Lusaka.
Principal towns: Ndola, Chingola, Mufulira, Kabwe.
Languages: English is the official language, but some 40 African dialects are spoken.
Public holidays: October 24, Independence Day.
Geography: Situated in southern Africa, Zambia's territory is covered with highlands reaching an altitude of 1,525 m. There are many forests, the densest of them in the Congo and Zambezi basins.

West of the Kafue River are grassy plains extending for 64 km, which are frequently flooded during the rainy season. They provide the habitat for large herds of antelopes and buffaloes.

The Zambezi River, from which the name of the country is derived, encircles the southern part of the country and 1,400 of its 2,700-km length pass through Zambian territory. The river forms the natural frontier with Zimbabwe, the Victoria Falls, and the artificial Kariba Lake, with its major tributaries the Luwangwa, the Kafue and the Kabompo.

In the north-west is the Cambeze River (the Upper Congo), which rises from Bangwuelu Lake (1,170 m above sea level) and drains into Lake Mweru. The Luapula River forms Zambia's frontier with Zaire. A section of Lake Tanganyika belongs to Zambia.

The climate is tropical and there are three distinct seasons: hot and humid from November to April, with temperatures ranging from 26.7 to 32.2°C; the rainy season, when the average rainfall in the north is 1,270 mm, but 76.2 mm in Lusaka, and 50.8 to 76.2 mm south of the capital.

Brief history: Archaeological finds on Zambian territory indicate the existence there of human life from the remotest times. Remains of the so-called *Homo rhodesiensis*, similar to those of the Neanderthal man, show that prehistoric man had inhabited the region long before the Iron Age.

From the middle Paleolithic Age up to approximately the 16th century, when the Bantu peoples arrived, the area was inhabited by so-called Bushmen.

Among the different Bantu peoples who settled on today's Zambian territory, the highest authority was held by a supreme chief who was assisted by a council of notables. The Bantu people, in particular the Barotse, established commercial ties with Arabs, the Swahili and the Portuguese, who were the first Europeans to have reached the area in 1798.

The Portuguese presence was weak and basically commercial, and although the Portuguese wanted to link up their possessions in Angola and Mozambique by this territory, their plans were frustrated by British colonial expansion.

It was not until 1850-1855, when David Livingstone explored the region by following the course of the Zambezi, that it attracted the colonial interests of the European powers, Britain in particular.

Setting off from the British possessions in the south of Africa, the adventurer Cecil Rhodes advanced the colonialization of today's Zambia, which was proclaimed a protectorate in 1888.

A year later Rhodes set up the British South Africa Company, which was granted a monopoly on the exploitation of the mineral resources in the north of the territory. In 1895 the territory was named Rhodesia in honour of its colonizer (it covered today's states of Zambia in the north and Zimbabwe in the south).

In the course of his conquest Rhodes met with the resistance of the native inhabitants. On two occasions the Matabele tribes rose against the British, but were brutally suppressed, and thus, gradually, the original inhabitants of the whole region were forced to withdraw to less fertile land.

The conquest of what used to be Rhodesia was not completed until 1902, following the suppresssion of many uprisings. The British South Africa Company signed a very important agreement in Northern Rhodesia with Lewanika, the ruler of the large Lozi Empire on the Zambezi River. Lewanika acceded to the agreement in the hope that he would receive from Great Britain military, financial and technical assistance in exchange for limited rights in exploitation of the mineral resources in his realm and for British control over the external relations of the Lozi.

In the north and east the Company had to fight a number of battles with the local tribes, including the Bemba in the highlands south of Lake Tanganyika, whose chiefs were engaged in intensive trade with ivory and slaves.

In 1911 the Protectorate of Northern Rhodesia was formed, with Livingstone as its capital. It was made up of two protectorates into which the territory had been divided—the north-west with its capital in Kolomo, and North-eastern Rhodesia, whose capital was Fort Jameson.

The discovery of deposits of zinc and vanadium, and in particular of vast deposits of copper ore, attracted many Europeans and awakened the interest of European monopolies. As early as in 1911 there already existed a working class which staged a number of strikes and gave rise to a movement whose nationalist sentiments were subsequently demonstrated in the formation of Mutual African Aid organizations before World War II. In 1923, the Mweazo Association was established by David Kaunda, the father of today's President of Zambia.

The mining monopoly of the British South Africa Company expired in 1924 and Northern Rhodesia became a protectorate of the British Crown.

The African mutual-aid organizations met in Lusaka, the capital since 1935, in 1946 and formed a Federation of Welfare Societies, which became the nucleus of the first African political organization, the African National Congress (ANC), founded by Harry Nkumbula in 1949.

Northern Rhodesia was united with Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia in the Central African Federation in August 1953 for the purpose of full British control of the copper-ore-producing belt.

In 1958 the African National Congress of Zambia split away from Nkumbula's ANC as the result of differences between the nationalist leader Kenneth Kaunda and Nkumbula. Shortly thereafter Kaunda was imprisoned because of his opposition to the Federation and the draft constitution the British had proposed for it.

Kaunda advocated the formation of an independent African state named Zambia. His new party was banned in 1959. The next year he was released and formed the United National Independence Party (UNIP). In 1962, following a civil disobedience campaign organized by UNIP, the British introduced a new constitution for Northern Rhodesia, under which an African majority could be formed in the legislature. The Federation was dissolved in 1963, and on October 24, 1964, Northern Rhodesia obtained formal independence from Great Britain, adopting the name of Zambia.

In 1965 the government led by Kenneth Kaunda abrogated his country's commercial agreements with South Africa and Portugal. In December of that year it asked Great Britain to send troops to the country in order to protect Zambia from a possible attack by

Rhodesia, which had unilaterally proclaimed its independence from Britain in a move denounced by all African states, including Zambia. This situation produced great problems for the new republic, which had inherited an economic dependence on neighbouring Rhodesia, which controlled its foreign trade and other vital economic sectors.

In 1967 the Zambian government accused Britain of neglecting her responsibilities towards the people of Zimbabwe in order to pursue her economic interests in South Africa and Rhodesia.

The new state of Zambia tried to develop its large copper industry and its agricultural resources in spite of unfavourable geographical factors, such as its lack of an outlet to the sea.

In 1967 Kaunda submitted for consideration by his party a Manifesto of Humanism in Zambia, a 54-page document which analyzed the possibilities of initiating a socialist way of development of the country, based on the principles—"people before ideology, man before institutions". The country should work for the elimination of privileges and inequality. The document also underlined that one of the mainstays of such development was state ownership of the land.

These proposals produced great tension among groups opposing Kaunda's line. The next year, however, he defeated the opposition in a constitutional referendum and was reelected for another presidential term of office. At the end of the year Zambia condemned in the U.N. Security Council the Portuguese attack on the village of Kawete in Zambia's eastern province.

In April 1968 a programme was instituted of reconstruction and Zambianization of the national economy, which was designed to find a solution of the problem of foreign control of the national resources.

In August 1969 a government crisis provoked a difficult situation, involving tribal differences and struggles for power—characteristic of the early years of the republic. A commission was set up in September for the purpose of revising the party's statutes, and in October the government amnestied about a hundred political prisoners on the occasion of the party's tenth anniversary.

Under Kaunda's direction, a programme was launched of Africanization of the leading cadres, of equalization of wages and salaries between Africans and Europeans, of establishment of agricultural co-operatives and of state control of the principal means of production. The plan of Zambianization began to be implemented in March 1969; under its provisions the foreign monopolies lost more than 16% of control of capitalist production in the country.

In September 1970 the Third Summit Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries took place in Lusaka. Its Final Declaration laid the foundations for strengthening the non-aligned movement and reiterated its complete support of, and solidarity with, the African people fighting for their independence.

In November 1970, following another cabinet change, a new state was initiated in the government's drive to increase the state sector of the national economy and to institute new rules for foreign investments. In October of that year Zambia ceased buying Rhodesian coal. On November 10 Kaunda announced government control of foreign insurance companies and a ban on the activities of foreign retailers in the country.

Zambia's attitude to the racist regimes in southern Africa was extremely difficult to maintain because of pressing economic realities—its dependence on copper exports, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the fact that until Ian Smith's unilateral declaration of Rhodesia's independence in 1965, 80% of Zambia's foreign trade and all its copper exports were carried by Rhodesian railways and through the Mozambican port of Beira. The application of sanctions against Rhodesia and Zambia's relations with the national liberation movements in southern Africa became still more problematic when the Rhodesians closed their frontier with Zambia in January 1973 in order to strangle Kaunda. This move caused Zambia a loss of some £600,000,000 before 1979.

A single-party system was proclaimed in Zambia in December 1972. However, the rightist opposition organized itself around the former Vice-President, Simon Kapwepwe, and within some ethnic groups, criticizing mainly three aspects of Kaunda's policy—his "humanistic socialism", state participation in economic activity (state control of 51% of the capital of the large companies) and his involvement with the national liberation movements in Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe). On August 25, 1973, a new constitution was approved and in December general elections took place, which strengthened the position of the government, again headed by Kaunda.

The collapse of Portugal's empire in Africa in April 1974 had a profound impact in all southern Africa, including Zambia. The resulting radicalization of the national liberation movement in the area made the racist regimes in Salisbury and Pretoria step up their measures against the independent African governments, which felt the need of uniting in what became known as the Front Line in 1976. Zambia became one of these Front Line States.

This political process was paralleled by some very serious problems for the Zambian economy. The Angolan railway to Lobito was closed in 1975, the TAZARA (Tanzania-Zambia) railway built with Chinese assistance between 1974 and 1976 could not carry more than one-third of Zambia's exportable copper, which for months piled up in the congested port of Dar es Salaam, and to make things still worse, the steep drop in the price of copper in the second half of 1974 made Zambia lose most of its income (1,000,000 dollars a month at the beginning of 1978, compared with 70,000,000 in normal times). Added to this were serious social problems, such as a swollen urban population (40% of the total population lived in urban areas in 1979), thousands of refugees from Zaire, Angola and Rhodesia, or 40,000 European employees in the midst of growing African unemployment—and all this under a strict control imposed by the International Monetary Fund and some 20 capitalist countries and institutions to which Zambia was indebted.

In 1979 the IMF lent to Zambia 322,000,000 dollars for financing the continued operation of the large copper-mining companies, the Nchanga Consolidated Copper Mines and the Roan Consolidated Mines, whose tax returns amounted to half of Zambia's state revenue.

The period 1974 to 1979 was the worst period in Zambia's short independent life. It was marked by constant military and economic pressure exercised by the government in Salisbury, first under Ian Smith and then by his African associate, Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who on November 5, 1979, blocked the shipment of 200,000 tons of maize to Zambia in order to force Kaunda to cut his relations with the Zimbabwe African People's Union—ZAPU—of Joshua Nkomo. Then there was pressure exerted by South Africa—Zambia's heavy industry and commerce are dominated by South African interests—which could not be eased by a policy tried out for a short period of time by Kaunda, who attempted to persuade Pretoria to convince the regime in Salisbury that it should reconcile itself with Zimbabwe nationalism. And then there were problems with the different factions in the Patriotic Front of Zimbabawe and other Front Line states, which on some occasions criticized President Kaunda's extreme caution.

In April 1979 helicopter-borne commando troops of Rhodesia's General Walls attacked Joshua Nkomo's headquarters in the very centre of Lusaka. In November of the same year the Rhodesians destroyed Zambian bridges linking that country with the other independent states in the area. From October 20 to 22, Rhodesian troops destroyed in two raids a ZAPU camp located 40 km within Zambian territory. On November 20, 1979, Kaunda ordered general mobilization in order to counter these attacks. He took this step under a situation when there was great dissatisfaction and disorder in the ranks of the Zambian armed forces and when he was criticized by rightist elements, which demanded the return of some enterprises to the private sector, an "opening" towards South Africa, restrictions on ZAPU activities in Zambia and recognition of the Muzorewa government installed in Salisbury in May of that year.

In May 1979 an article of the Zambian constitution was amended in order to give jobs in agriculture to the unemployed, and an obligatory national service was instituted for a turn of 20 months for secondary-school-leavers as a means of giving them military training and of providing them with instruction in farming. "Parasites must be reformed. Discipline is needed. This country must progress and will progress," President Kaunda declared on that occasion.

Already earlier, in 1975, a UNIP congress underlined the necessity of a "return to the land" and at the end of 1977 a Bill was enacted that would permit sending the unemployed to the rural areas in order to revolutionize agriculture. This project was opposed by the trade unions, which drew the government's attention to the unemployment already existing in the rural areas.

Although the celebrations marking the 15th anniversary of Zambia's independence were marked by great austerity and moderation, there were better times ahead. The Lusaka agreements between the government in London and the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe finally brought about a cease-fire in Zimbabwe in January 1980, general elections in that country in Febuary, and the proclamation of independence of former Rhodesia on April 18, 1980, under a government headed by ZANU's Robert Mugabe. A few days earlier, a Conference for the Coordination of the Countries of Southern Africa was formed in the Zambian capital as the outcome of a summit meeting of nine countries—Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe—which was also attended by Namibia's SWAPO, the Secretary-General of the OAU and representatives of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa. The basic objective of the session was to reduce the economic dependence of the nine participating countries on the Republic of South Africa.

Economy: Zambia's gross national product in 1978 amounted to 2,530,000,000 dollars. Its 1979 gross industrial production rose to 1,250,000,000 dollars, representing a 0.5% annual rate of growth. 14% of the GNP is produced by agriculture, 41% by industry (almost exclusively mining) and 45% by services. Extraction and export of copper account for 90% of Zambia's export earnings. Its agriculture produces maize, millet, sorghum and peanuts as the principal crops. The country's exports in 1979 amounted to 811,000,000 dollars, compared with 680,000,000 dollars worth of imports. The principal export items are copper, cobalt, emeralds and zinc. In 1977, 80% of Zambia's exports went to the advanced capitalist countries, 16% to the developing countries, and 4% to the socialist countries. In the same year 69% of the country's labour force was employed in agriculture, 11% in industry and 20% in services. Also in 1977 the external public debt amounted to 1,392,000,000 dollars and the country's foreign-exchange reserves stood at 74,000,000 dollars.

Government: Zambia, which is a member of the British Commonwealth, is a republic with a presidential system of government. The President, who is elected by popular vote for a term of five years, exercises executive power and has the authority under the 1964 Constitution to dissolve the National Assembly, if that body is still in office. The President is also the commander-in-chief of the armed forces.

The National Assembly has 125 elected members and ten members are appointed by the President.

The constitution, which was enacted in 1964, has been amended twice—in 1968 and in 1972—the latter amendment having instituted Zambia's single-party government.

Armed forces: Zambia's armed forces have 7,000 men serving in the army and 800 men in the air force which has 18 aircraft. There is also a paramilitary force—the National Guard—of 1,200 men.

Organizations: Political parties were disbanded in 1972 and only a single party is officially recognized—the United Party for National Independence (UNPNI)—whose Secretary-General is named by the President of the Republic.

Education: There are about 3,000 primary and secondary schools in Zambia with a total enrolment of 800,000 pupils. The University of Zambia, established in 1966, is attended by more than 2,000 students.

In 1965 the government established the David Kaunda Secondary Technical School, which provides to most talented students technical education needed for the development of the country.

The educational programme for children and adolescents is paralleled by an expansion of adult education facilities. In 1954 this system had only nine schools built by the colonial administration, mostly for training its employees. These schools had an enrolment of only 12,000 students.

After 1964 the government of Zambia launched a programme which envisaged the deployment of schools for adults throughout the country, establishing them basically in the rural areas.

The Ministry of Education also initiated correspondence courses for the purpose of raising the educational level of workers and thus of enabling them to enrol in secondary schools. In order to coordinate all these efforts, the Ministry of Education established an Adult Education Advisory Council.

Public health: The National Education Plan (1977-1981) includes among its principal objectives the integration of preventive and therapeutic medicine. Special attention is devoted to malnutrition, avitaminosis, malaria, smallpox, tuberculosis, leprosy, sleeping sickness and other ailments through immunization programmes and sanitation and hygiene campaigns on a national level.

Zambia's three major hospital centres are located in Lusaka, Kitwo and Ndola; they possess the largest capacity for providing specialized medical services and treatment. There are also a mental hospital in Chainama, a leprosarium in Liteta and the Arthur Davison Pediatric Hospital in Ndola.

There are more than 1,000 maternity and child clinics in Zambia, thanks to a programme launched in 1967. In 1972 a health service in schools was integrated with the mother and child care programme.

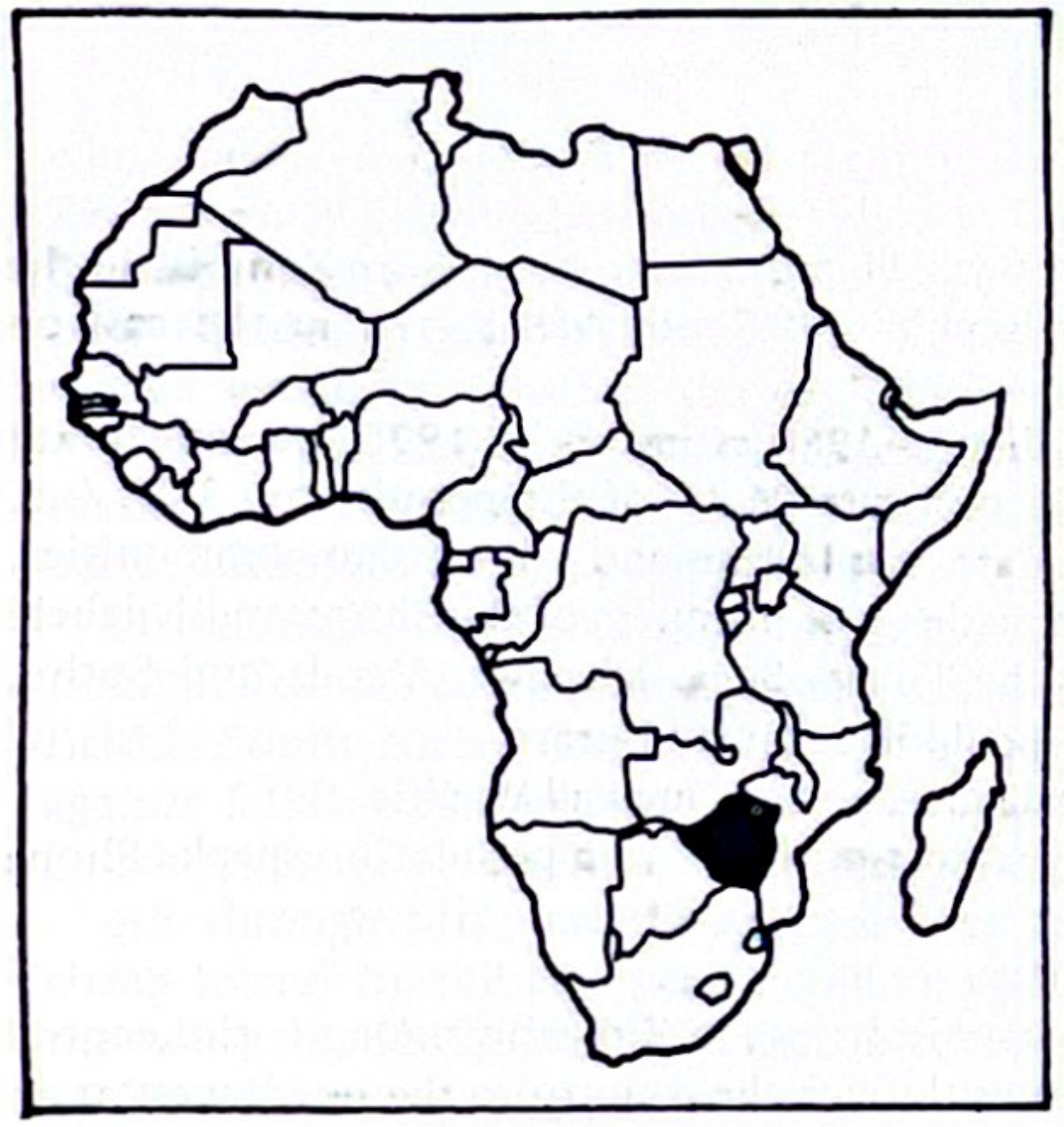
Zambia's first anti-tuberculosis campaign was carried out in the period 1967-1971, with the immunization of more than 2,000,000 individuals. This was followed by a programme of vaccination against tuberculosis of newly born infants, hospital patients and children entering school for the first time.

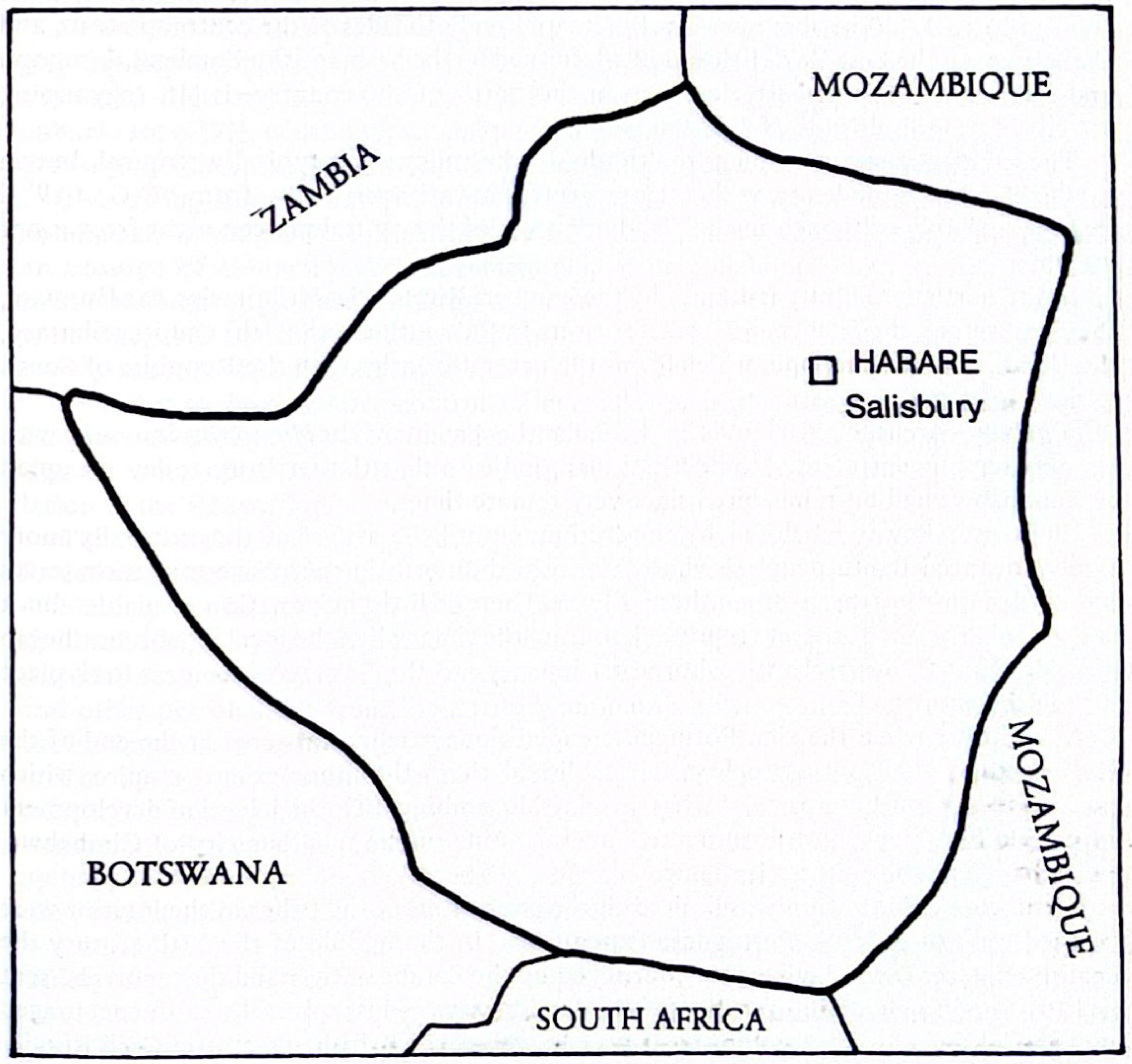
A bacteriological laboratory was built in Lusaka under the auspices of the National Scientific Research Council. There are four nursing schools in Kitwe, Lusaka, Mufulire (owned by a mining company) and Ndola.

The public health budget is five times greater than in 1964, and hospital services have expanded 170%.

Religion: There is no official religion in Zambia. Animist cults prevail among the African population, while Christian creeds predominate among the Europeans and Islam is the dominant religion among the inhabitants of Arab descent.

ZIMBABWE




MOZAMBIQUE
ZAMBIA
HARARE
Salisbury
BOTSWANA
MOZAMBIQUE
SOUTH AFRICA

Official name: The Republic of Zimbabwe.
Area: 390,757 sq.km.
Borders: Zimbabwe is a landlocked country which in the north borders on Zambia, in the west on Botswana, in the south on the Republic of South Africa, and in the east on Mozambique.
Population: 7,280,000 inhabitants, according to 1980 estimates. In 1978 the annual rate of population growth was 3.4%. Africans constitute 96.3% of the population, 3.3% (i.e. some 240,000) are Europeans, and the rest are East Indians and other Asian communities. The majority of the African population is made up of members of the Shona and Ndebele tribes of Bantu origin. Other tribes are the Tonga, Sena, Hlengwe, Venda and Sotho.
Capital: Salisbury, which, it is proposed, should be renamed Harare.
Principal towns: Bulawayo, Hartley, Umtali, Gwelo, Que-Que and Wankie.
Languages: English is the official language. Most of the African population speaks Shona and Ndebele in daily communication.
Public holidays: April 18, Independence Day.
Geography: There are three distinct geographical areas in Zimbabwe. One is the central plateau known as the High Veld, which runs through the country to the north-west at an altitude exceeding 1,300 m above sea level. The second one is the highlands of the Middle Veld (600 to 1,300 m above sea level), situated on both sides of the central plateau, and the last area is the Low Veld (below 600 m), formed by the basins of the Zambezi, Limpopo and Sabi rivers. The highest elevation—in the north of the country—is Mt. Ingyangani, which rises to the altitude of 2,589 m.

The climate varies according to altitude. In the valleys it is typically tropical, but in the highlands it is moderate, with a temperature that varies very little—from 11°C to 19°C in June and July—although in the high-lying areas of the central plateau night frost is not uncommon.

In the north the country is drained by the Zambezi River and its tributaries, the Hunyani, the Sengwe and the Shangani. The major rivers in the south are the Sabi and its tributary, the Lundi, and the Limpopo, which forms the natural frontier with the Republic of South Africa.

Brief history: Archaeological finds, in particular the remains of the *Homo rhodesiensis*, with features reminiscent of the Neanderthal man, indicate that the territory today occupied by Zaimbabwe had been inhabited since very remote times.

Much later it was inhabited by the Bushmen until the arrival of the culturally more highly advanced Bantu peoples, who came from the north in successive migration waves and settled in most parts of southern Africa. There is little information available about this period. The first concrete reports date from the times when the local inhabitants began to trade with Arab merchants, whose first journeys to the East African coast took place in the 8th century.

At the time when the first Portuguese expeditions reached this area at the end of the 15th century, the Bantu people had established there the Monomotapa empire, which extened to the southern parts of what is today Mozambique. The high level of development its people had reached is documented by the ruins of the fabulous city of Zimbabwe, which has given the country its name.

Portuguese colonization was limited to the coast, so that the tribes in the interior were exposed only to sporadic Portuguese expeditions. In the middle of the 11th century the English explorer David Livingstone journeyed up the Zambezi River and the reports he sent back to London about the fertility of the land he saw and its mineral wealth encouraged immigration by European colonists. It was, however, the British adventurer Cecil Rhodes who organized large-scale colonization of the territories occupied today by Zambia and Zimbabwe, which had then been called in his honour Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia respectively. Great Britain claimed them as her protectorate in 1888. A year later Rhodes founded the British South Africa Company and obtained from the British Crown exclusive rights to the exploitation of the natural resources of that territory.

The colonialists established their rule by force against the African inhabitants, who resisted the seizure of their lands. Thus, the British crushed an uprising by the Ndebele in 1893, killing the latter's king, Lobengula.

After World War I the white colonists in Southern Rhodesia asked the government in London for an autonomous government which would replace the almost all-powerful British South Africa Company. A referendum was held in 1922, in which 8,774 whites against 5,989 voted in favour of internal autonomy in a territorial entity separate from South Africa. The new statute went into effect in 1923.

All through this time the Africans were deprived of all rights and were used only as cheap labour by the European colonists, who seized the best lands. In subsequent years the white population, although a small minority, reserved for itself 46.7% of the land, left 46.7% of the land—the poorest—to the African majority, and the remaining 6.6%—forests and hunting preserves—were set aside as government land.

World War II was a period of great economic boom for Southern Rhodesia because of growing exports of strategic minerals, tobacco and other products to Great Britain. It is estimated that between 1938 and 1958 the country's economy had been rising at the annual rate of 9%, which fact stimulated white immigration from Britain and South Africa. The size of the white population thus rose from 80,500 to 205,000 in 1958.

This rising tide of immigration, together with a series of measures adopted by the colonialists to the growing detriment and discrimination of the African majority, provoked an upsurge of the nationalist movement. The economic boom, characterized by foreign investments in agriculture, industry and mining, did not benefit the African workers, who were relegated to the position of cheap, unskilled labour. A strike of railway workers took place in 1945 and a more general one in 1948.

In order to improve her control of her colonies in the area, Great Britain created a Federation of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland on September 2, 1953. The territory of Southern Rhodesia (i.e., today's Zimbabwe) had the largest white population in the Federation.

The nationalist sentiments further grew in 1951, when a newly enacted law made possible forced migration of Africans to make way for white settlers.

Some years later, in 1957, the African National Congress (ANC) was founded under the leadership of Joshua Nkomo, Robert Chikerema and George Nayandor. Its members included from the very beginning such men as Robert Mugabe, the Rev. Ndabaningui Sithole and other personalities from the African community, who wanted independence and the establishment of a majority government.

The ANC was banned in February 1959, and hundreds of its political activists were detained. In January 1960 the movement re-emerged under the name of the National Democratic Party, which, in turn, was banned in December 1961. Repression was stepped up but the nationalist forces created the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) which the colonial authorities outlawed in September 1962.

In 1964 Sithole split away from ZAPU and founded the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU).

This was a period of growing repression of the African nationalists by the white authorities. Their organizations suffered heavily from detentions, summary executions and forced exile. The first guerilla groups emerged and the racist regime in South Africa began to cooperate militarily with the Rhodesian whites.

On November 11, 1965, Prime Minister Ian Smith unilaterally proclaimed the independence of Rhodesia, drew up a constitution differing from the British legislation, and established a legal background for a regime in which the whites held all the reins of power.

This unilateral proclamation of independence provoked an upsurge of the nationalist guerilla struggle as well as still greater repression by the Rhodesian police and army. Faced by a massive protest on the part of the Organization of African Unity, Britain opposed Smith's action. A set of economic and political sanctions against Rhodesia was adopted by the international community, but Ian Smith succeeded in circumventing them with the overt assistance of South Africa, Portugal and many Western firms which traded with the Rhodesian regime with the tacit consent of their governments.

Many of the nationalist leaders, including Nkomo, Mugabe and others, were imprisoned in this period. In 1970 the Methodist bishop Abel Muzorewa re-established the African National Congress.

Great Britain entered into many negotiations with Ian Smith in order to do away with the unilateral independence, but all failed.

Beginning in 1972, the guerilla operations steadily increased. The independence of Mozambique and Angola in 1975, following the disintegration of the Portuguese colonial system, gave a new impetus to the struggle waged by the patriots of Zimbabwe for a government of the African majority. Just as Zambia, Mozambique, too, closed its frontiers with Rhodesia, and from then on, all of the latter's foreign trade could pass only through South Africa, which greatly assisted Smith's regime with soldiers and military equipment.

Rhodesian troops made many incursions into Mozambique, Zambia and Angola in the attempt to intimidate these countries, which were providing assistance to the Zimbabawe patriots. At the same time, the white minority government imposed a curfew, enclosed the rural population in so-called "protected villages", and turned the homes of the white estate owners into virtual fortresses.

In a parallel move and in an attempt to raise hopes for a negotiated solution, Smith released, in the mid-1970s, some of the principal nationalist leaders. However, the negotiations which took place in August 1975 and in March 1976 produced no concrete result.

Concerned about the upsurge of the guerilla struggle, which could have endangered its interests in southern Africa, the U.S. government sent the then Secretary of State Henry Kissinger to Salisbury and Pretoria in April 1976 in order to try to achieve a negotiated settlement which would meet some of the demands of the African majority but would at the same time secure Western interests.

A conference was organized in Geneva, which met from October to December of that year and which was attended by all the interested parties—Great Britain, the Rhodesian regime and four African delegations headed by Robert Mugabe, Joshua Nkomo, Ndabaningui Sithole and Abel Muzorewa. The negotiations utterly failed, due to Smith's intransigence.

In October 1976 Mugabe and Nkomo decided to coordinate the political and military activities of ZANU and ZAPU and for this purpose created the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe, of which they became co-chairmen. At that time too, the neighbouring countries—Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola, Zambia and Botswana—formed what became known as the Front Line in order to coordinate their actions in southern Africa against Rhodesian and South African aggression.

In the wake of these events, guerilla fighting spread to all parts of Rhodesia at an unprecedented level and reached even such closely guarded areas as the suburbs of Salisbury. It was then, when Ian Smith negotiated a separate "internal settlement" with Muzorewa, Sithole and Jeremiah Chirau (who had served in his cabinet in 1976) for the purpose of creating a multi-racial government which could put an end to the armed struggle.

Elections were held in the middle of 1979 under martial law and Muzorewa was appointed Prime Minister. However, his government did not obtain international recognition or the necessary internal support, and the guerilla operations continued unabated.

In the face of this situation, the British government organized a conference of all the interested parties at Lancaster House in London in Septmber 1979. After protracted negotiations, an agreement was reached three months later.

Although the constitution approved by the British parliament for Zimbabwe protected the interests of the white minority for a period of ten years and in some respects placed limitations on the future government, it did open the way for an African government which, both Smith and London hoped, would revert to Muzorewa.

Lord Soames was appointed Governor for the transition period before elections were held, a cease-fire was proclaimed, and the African guerilla troops as well as the Rhodesian army were concentrated in separate camps. In the elections which took place on February 27, 1980, the candidates of the old Patriotic Front won 77 of the 80 African seats in the legislative assembly (the remaining 20 seats are reserved for the white minority). Mugabe's ZANU-PF won 57 seats, Nkomo's Patriotic Front got 20 seats, and Robert Mugabe was elected Prime Minister by an overwhelming majority.

Since then a process of social change has been taking place within the limits temporarily set by the constitution. Free education was instituted, steps were taken to increase free health care of the African population, and the government plans to acquire 1,500,000 hectares of land for distribution among the poor peasants. Steps were also taken to form a national army by a merger of the different guerilla organizations.

Economy: Agriculture and mining are the mainstays of Zimbabwe's economy, although there is also an industrial sector producing textiles, tinned food, fertilizers, furniture, plastics and motor vehicles.

According to FAO figures for 1977, Zimbabwe had the total of 39,058,000 hectares of land, of which 2,480,000 were used for crop production, 4,856,000 were pastures, 23,810,000 were covered with forests and the remaining 7,621,000 hectares were mountainous and unproductive areas. In 1979 agricultural products accounted for 45% of the country's exports. At the time of the proclamation of independence, the best land was owned by 5,400 white farmers and supplied only 12% of the agricultural production, used mostly for self-subsistence. Land tenure is one of the most serious problems the new, independent government is facing.

It is estimated that in 1979 the country produced 520,000 tons of maize, some 90,000 tons of wheat, 114,000 tons of tobacco (the main export item), 166,000 tons of cotton, 320,000 tons of sugar, and 4,100 tons of coffee. According to statistics published by the FAO in 1978, the livestock sector included 6,027,000 head of cattle, 705,000 sheep, 1,944,000 goats, and 209,000 pigs. However, it seems that a drought and stepped up fighting in the subsequent year, which preceded independence, affected the numbers of livestock.

Zimbabwe has considerable mineral wealth. The output of its mining industry in 1979 included 542,000 tons of chromium, 2,584,000 tons of coal, 30,000 tons of copper, 1,201,000 tons of iron, 14,590 tons of nickel, 260,000 tons of asbestos, 386,000 ounces of gold and 977,000 ounces of silver. The existing power-generating capacity of 600,000 kW does not cover the country's needs. A large thermal power plant is under construction at Wankie, the site of major coal deposits, which should raise Zimbabwe's installed power-generating potential to 1,680,000 kW by 1985.

The official currency is the Zimbabwe dollar, whose fixed rate of exchange is 1.6 U.S. dollars per one Zimbabwe dollar. Taking this exchange rate—similar to that of the former Rhodesian dollar—as a basis, the 1979 balance of trade showed a surplus of 217,281,600 dollars, the result of exports worth 1,095,843,200 dollars and imports valued at 878,561,600 dollars. In the same year, according to pre-independence data, the per capita income was 520 dollars, although it is necessary to bear in mind the huge difference between the income of the white minority and that of the African majority. The national budget for the fiscal year 1978-1979 closed with a deficit of 420,478,000 dollars, when expenditure amounted to 1,352,766,000 dollars and income to 932,288,000 dollars. The white minority government turned to private business to make up for this deficit, which was run up by the large military expenditure on fighting the nationalist guerillas. The then Rhodesia's external public debt rose to 108,800,000 dollars in 1977.

Government: Zimbabwe has a parliamentary type of government. The parliament has 100 seats, 20 of which are reserved for the white minority under the constitution approved by all the parties that attended the negotiations at Lancaster House. The other 80 seats are filled by representatives of the African population. The leader of the majority party automatically becomes Prime Minister and thus heads the executive branch of government. In the 1980 elections the ZANU-PF obtained 57 seats and an absolute majority, whereby its leader, Robert Mugabe, became Prime Minister and also holds the portfolio of the Minister of Defence. Joshua Nkomo, the leader of ZAPU, served as Minister without portfolio for national defence and public service. His party won 20 seats. Cabinet posts are also held by several representatives of the white minority, belonging to the Rhodesian Front Party.

Armed forces: The armed forces are in a state of reorganization. The white soldiers were demobilized. The new army now being formed will be made up of black soldiers from Ian Smith's armed forces and members of the nationalist guerilla forces.

Organizations: The most important African political parties are the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) of Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwe African People's Union of Joshua Nkomo, which formed the Patriotic Front in the last year of the liberation war. There are also the United African National Council of Abel Muzorewa (UANC) the ZANU led by Abanganingi Sithole, and the Zimbabwe Democratic Party of James Chikerema. The Rhodesian Front, founded by Ian Smith, is the majority party among the white population. A Trade Union Federation was established in 1980, and the Union of Zimbabwe Women is being organized.

Education: Efforts are under way to extend the benefits of free education to all parts of the country. According to available data, there were in 1978, 2,962 primary schools with 838,205 pupils, 186 secondary schools with 71,790 students, 12 teacher-training schools with 2,982 students and a university with 1,617 students.

Public health: Hospital care is available in the large towns. Medical and paramedical personnel of African origin is scarce, due to the very limited access of the native population to higher education until recently. Most of the dispensaries in the rural areas must be rebuilt. The average life expectancy at birth is 54 years. Since September 1, 1980, medical treatment is free for all those whose monthly earnings do not exceed 150 Zimbabwe dollars.

Religion: According to data published by churches active in the country, there are about a million Christians in Zimbabwe, the majority of them Protestants, and about 100,000 Moslems. The rest of the population adheres to traditional animist cults.

MOVEMENT OF THE NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES—LIST OF THE 95 FULL MEMBERS ACCORDING TO GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS

AFRICA	**Capital**	**Date of Admission**	
1. ALGERIA*	Algiers	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
2. ANGOLA	Luanda	Cairo	Oct., 1964
3. BENIN	Porto Novo	Cairo	Oct., 1964
4. BOTSWANA	Gaberones	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
5. BURUNDI	Bujumbura	Cairo	Oct., 1964
6. CAMEROON	Yaunde	Cairo	Oct., 1964
7. CAPE VERDE	Praia	Colombo	Aug., 1976
8. CHAD	Ndjamena	Cairo	Oct., 1964
9. CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC	Bangui	Cairo	Oct., 1964
10. COMOROS	Moroni	Colombo	Aug., 1976
11. CONGO	Brazzaville	Cairo	Oct., 1964
12. DJIBOUTI	Djibouti		July, 1978
13. EGYPT	Cairo	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
14. EQUATORIAL GUINEA	Malabo	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
15. ETHIOPIA*	Addis Ababa	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
16. GABON	Libreville	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
17. GAMBIA	Banjul	Algiers	Sept., 1973
18. GHANA*	Accra	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
19. GUINEA*	Conakry	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
20. GUINEA-BISSAU	Bissau	Colombo	Aug., 1976
21. IVORY COAST	Abidjan	Algiers	Sept., 1973
22. KENYA	Nairobi	Cairo	Oct., 1964
23. LESOTHO	Maseru	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
24. LIBERIA	Monrovia	Cairo	Oct., 1964
25. LIBYA	Tripoli	Cairo	Oct., 1964
26. MADAGASCAR	Antananarivo	Algiers	Sept., 1973
27. MALAWI	Lilongwe	Cairo	Oct., 1964
28. MALI*	Bamako	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
29. MAURITANIA	Noakchott	Cairo	Oct., 1964
30. MAURITIUS	Port Louis	Algiers	Sept., 1973
31. MOROCCO*	Rabat	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
32. MOZAMBIQUE	Maputo	Colombo	Aug., 1976
33. NAMIBIA	Windhoek		Oct., 1978
34. NIGER	Niamey	Algiers	Sept., 1973
35. NIGERIA	Lagos	Cairo	Oct., 1964

36. RWANDA	Kigali	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
37. SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE	Sao Tome	Colombo	Aug., 1976
38. SENEGAL	Dakar	Cairo	Oct., 1964
39. SEYCHELLES	Victoria	Colombo	Aug., 1976
40. SIERRA LEONE	Freetown	Cairo	Oct., 1964
41. SOMALIA*	Mogadishu	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
42. SUDAN*	Khartoum	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
43. SWAZILAND	Mdabane	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
44. TANZANIA	Dar-es-Salaam	Cairo	Oct., 1964
45. TOGO	Lome	Cairo	Oct., 1964
46. TUNISIA*	Tunis	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
47. UGANDA	Kampala	Cairo	Oct., 1964
48. UPPER VOLTA	Ouagadougou	Algiers	Sept., 1973
49. ZAIRE	Kinshasa	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
50. ZAMBIA	Lusaka	Cairo	Oct., 1964
51. ZIMBABWE	Harare	Havana	Sept., 1979

ASIA

1. AFGHANISTAN*	Kabul	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
2. BAHREIN	Manama	Algiers	Sept., 1973
3. BANGLADESH	Dacca	Algiers	Sept., 1973
4. BHUTAN	Thimbu	Algiers	Sept., 1973
5. BURMA*	Rangoon	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
6. INDIA*	New Delhi	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
7. INDONESIA*	Djakarta	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
8. IRAN	Teheran	Havana	Sept., 1979
9. IRAQ*	Baghdad	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
10. JORDAN	Amman	Cairo	Oct., 1964
11. KAMPUCHEA*	Phnom Penh	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
12. KOREA (PDR)	Pyongyang	Colombo	Aug., 1976
13. KUWAIT	Kuwait	Cairo	Oct., 1964
14. LAOS	Vientiane	Cairo	Oct., 1964
15. LEBANON*	Beirut	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
16. MALAYSIA	Kuala Lumpur	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
17. MALDIVES	Male	Colombo	Aug., 1976
18. NEPAL*	Kathmandu	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
19. OMAN	Muscat	Algiers	Sept., 1973
20. PAKISTAN	Islamabad	Havana	Sept., 1979
21. PALESTINE (PLO)	Jerusalem	Colombo	Aug., 1976
22. QATAR	Doha	Algiers	Sept., 1973
23. SAUDI ARABIA*	Riyadh	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
24. SINGAPORE	Singapore	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
25. SRI LANKA*	Colombo	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
26. SYRIA	Damascus	Cairo	Oct., 1964
27. UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	Abu Dhabi	Algiers	Sept., 1973
28. VIETNAM	Hanoi	Algiers	Sept., 1973
29. YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC*	Sanaa	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
30. YEMEN (PDR)	Aden	Cairo	Oct., 1964

EUROPE

1. CYPRUS*	Nicosia	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
2. MALTA	Valetta	Algiers	Sept., 1973
3. YUGOSLAVIA*	Belgrade	Belgrade	Sept., 1961

LATIN AMERICA

1. ARGENTINA	Buenos Aires	Algiers	Sept., 1973
2. BOLIVIA	La Paz	Havana	Sept., 1979
3. CUBA*	Havana	Belgrade	Sept., 1961
4. GRENADA	St. George	Havana	Sept., 1979
5. GUYANA	Georgetown	Lusaka	Sept., 1970
6. JAMAICA	Kingston	Cairo	Oct., 1964
7. NICARAGUA	Managua	Havana	Sept., 1979
8. PANAMA	Panama	Colombo	Aug., 1976
9. PERU	Lima	Algiers	Sept., 1973
10. SANTA LUCIA†	Castries	New Delhi	Feb., 1981
11. SURINAM	Paramaribo	Havana	Sept., 1979
12. TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	Port of Spain	Lusaka	Sept., 1970

* Founding members of the Movement.

† Applied for membership at the Foreign Ministers' conference held in New Delhi in February 1981. Its admission will be determined at the Seventh Summit Conference.

BELIZE, in Central America, has a special status with the right to vote.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries will hold its Seventh Summit Conference in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad from September 6 to 10, 1982.

The movement, which marked its twentieth anniversary in 1981, today has 95 full members, 15 countries, organizations and national liberation movements have the status of observers, and a large number of other countries and organizations attend its sessions as guests.

In the course of those two decades, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries has qualitatively gained in depth in confrontation with those historical phenomena and factors, which had motivated its formation — imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, Zionism, racial discrimination, apartheid, and the unjust economic order prevailing in the world.

Being aware of the necessity of a better mutual knowledge of the member-countries of the Movement, Prensa Latina and the Orbis Press Agency decided to publish another edition of this book — something of a brief encyclopaedia of the non-aligned countries — with the hope that they will thereby contribute to such better mutual knowledge and understanding.